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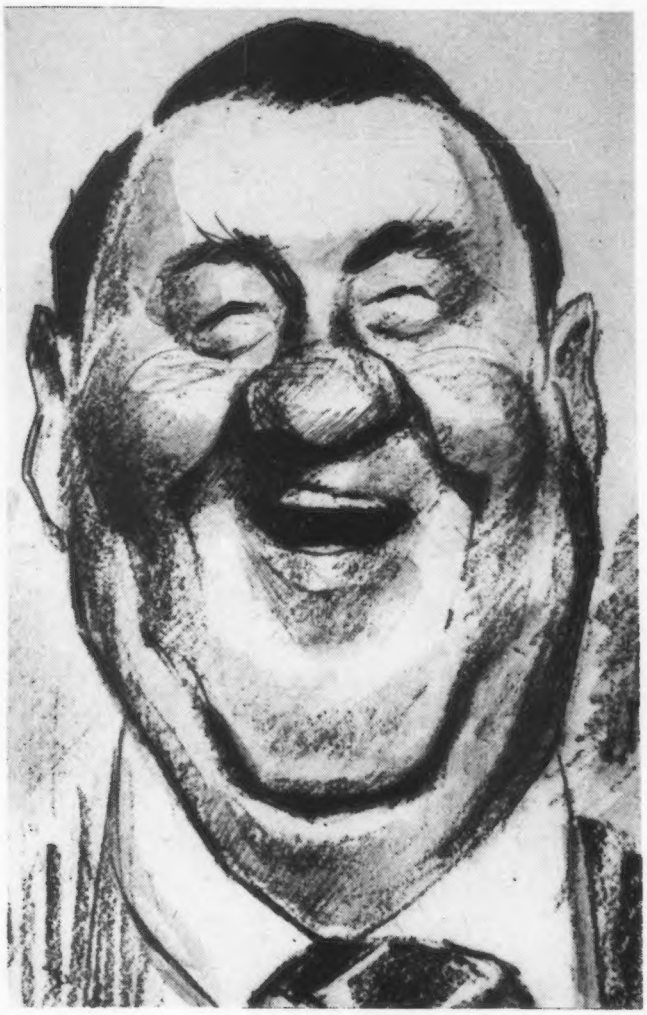

Sam Berman

NO. 52, DEC. 1981

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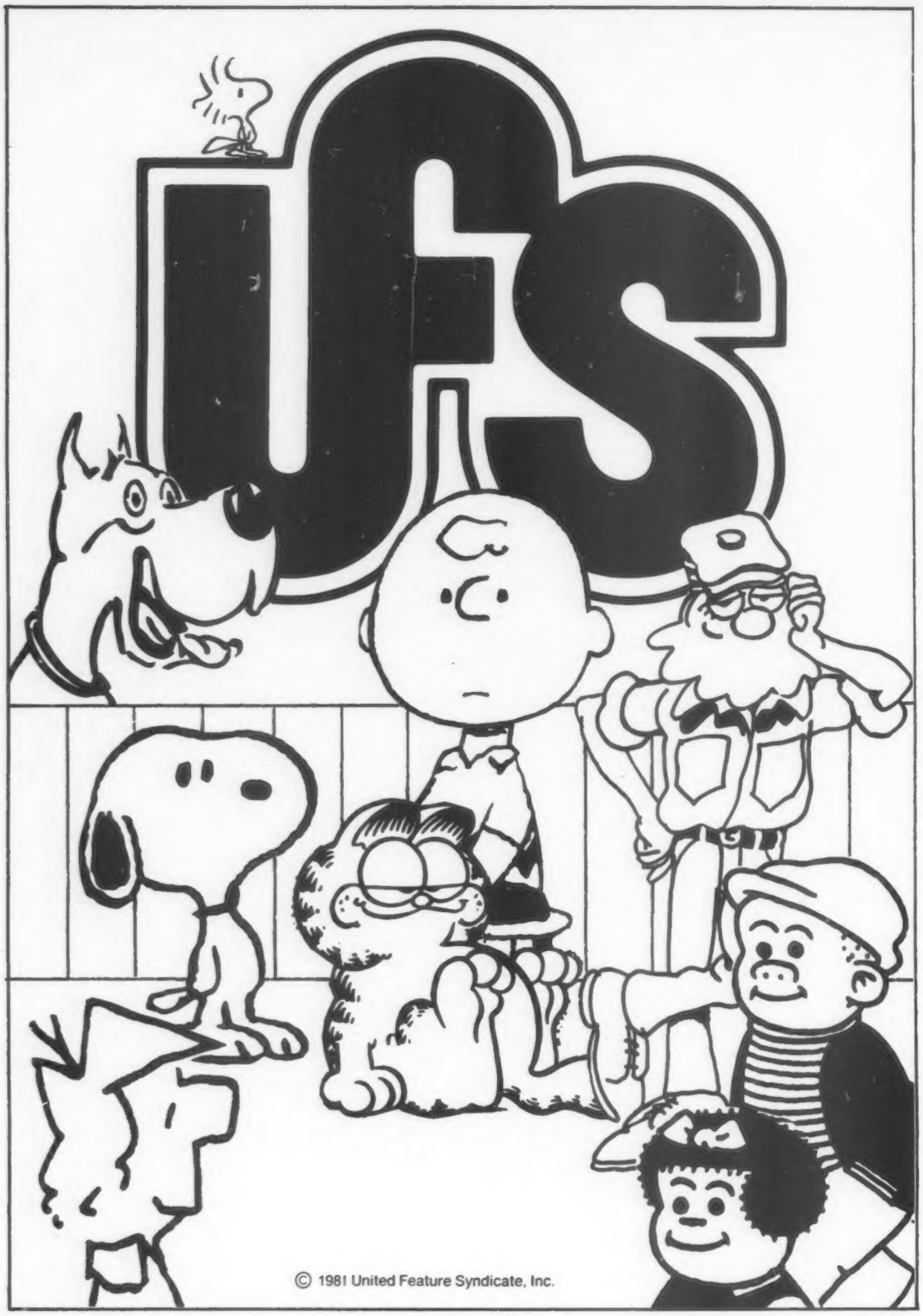

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CARTOONIST PROfiles

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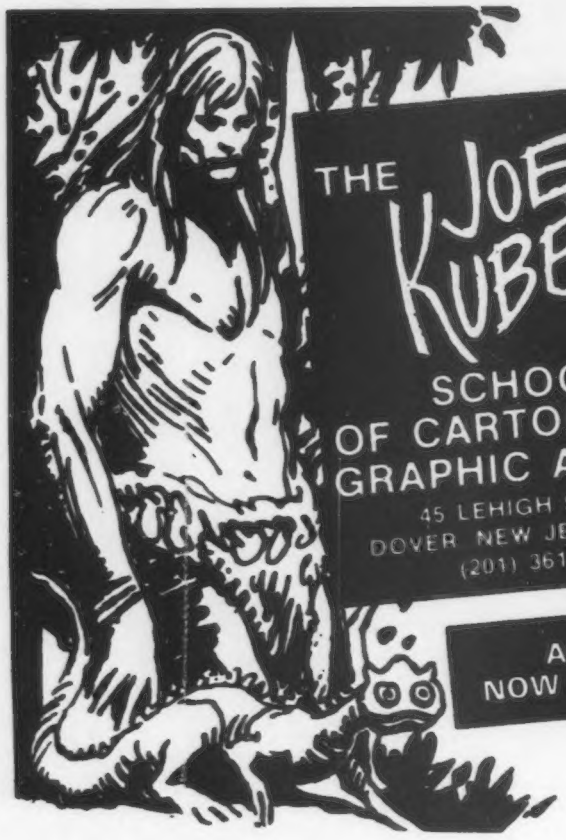

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KRAZY KAT.

by George Herriman

Exhibition, January 16 – February 6, 1982

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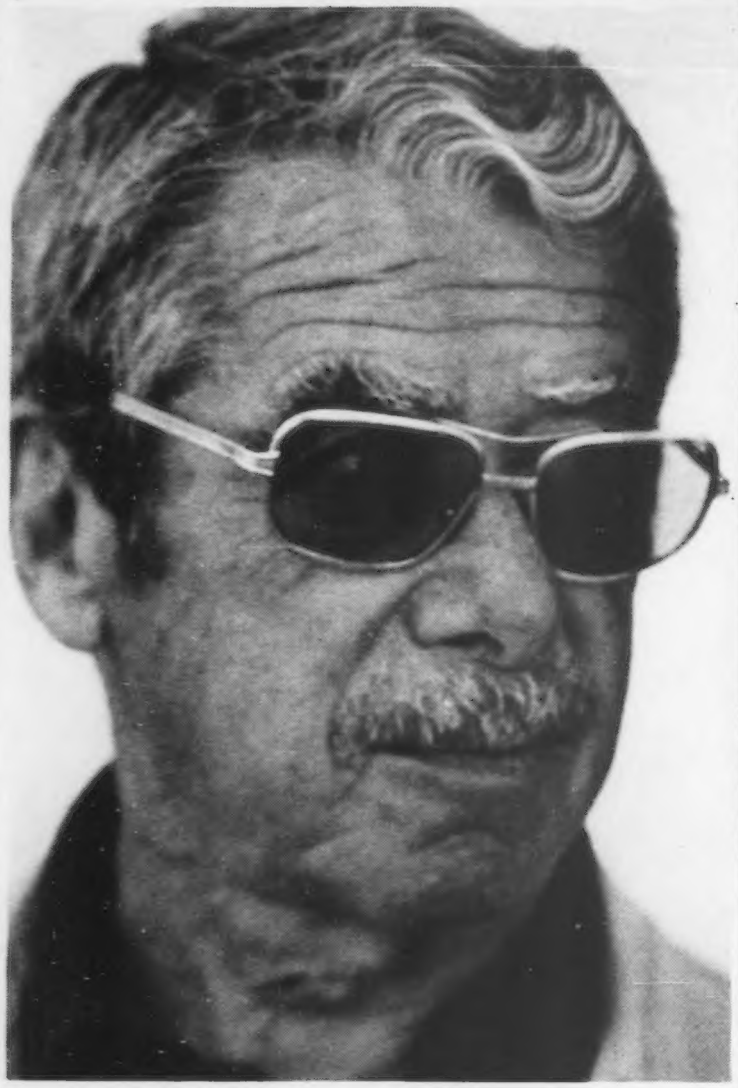


Sam Berman

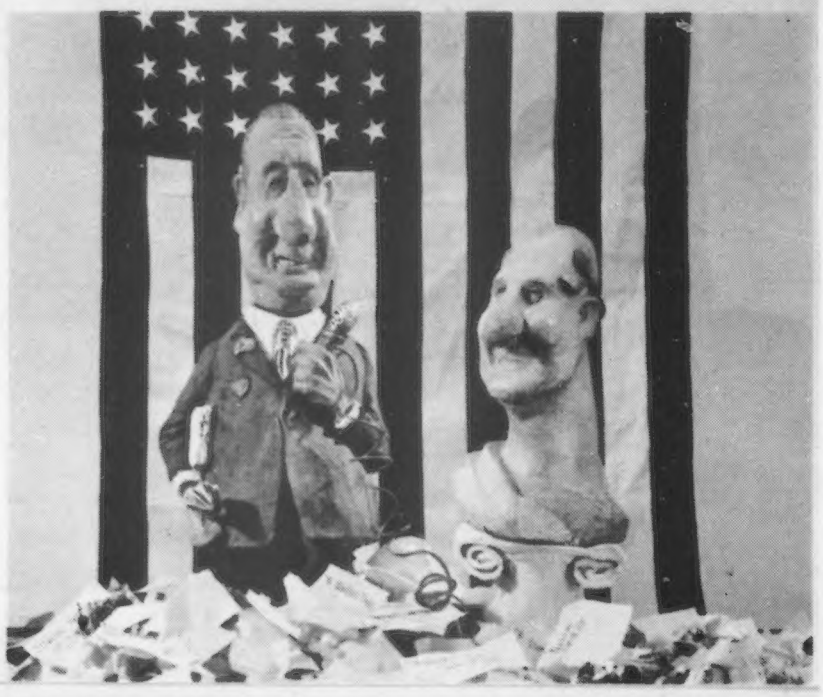
Recently we had the great pleasure of seeing again, at the Society of Illustrators in New York, our friend, famed caricaturist SAM BERMAN who was in the city visiting his son. Sam thought he was retiring back in 1971 when he and his wife moved to sunny Spain after a long and successful, though very pressurized, career in many branches of the arts. But like all dyed-in-the-wool cartoonists, he couldn't refrain from sketching anywhere and everywhere, and now we learn that several U.S. syndicates are interested in distributing the brilliant caricatures and graphic political cartoons he's been doing lately.

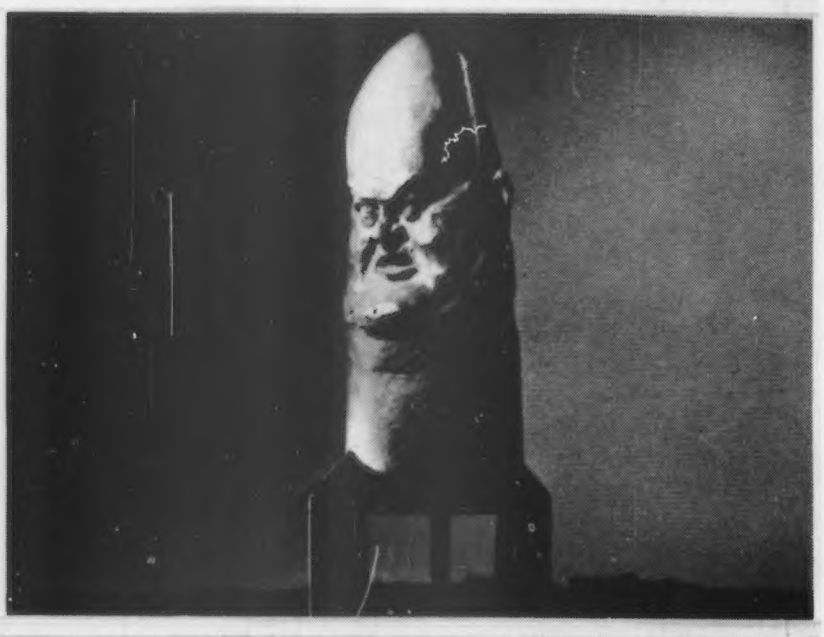
We first learned about Berman when the late Walter Winchell waxed very enthusiastic about him in his Daily Mirror column.

Sam had been working at the Newark Star Eagle in the photo-retouching department where he became very skilled with the airbrush, with which he soon began to do caricatures. He made his entry into the Broadway theatrical caricaturing scene with a widely-distributed drawing of Rudy Vallee who was opening in a Broadway musical. After that his caricatures were all over the place, in stage magazines, theatre sections of New York newspapers, on film posters and on theatre curtains.

LITHOPINION 19

The graphic arts and public affairs journal of Local One, Amalgamated Lithographers of America





Berman sculptures for 'Lithopinion' Magazine.

Pawn

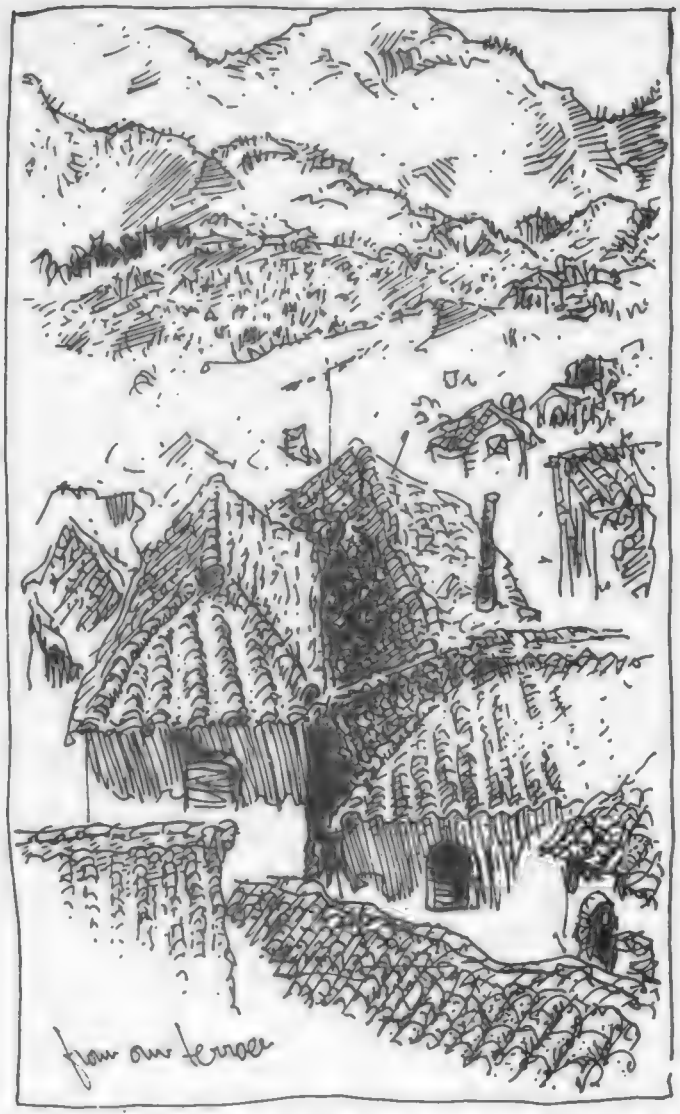
Queen

Pawn

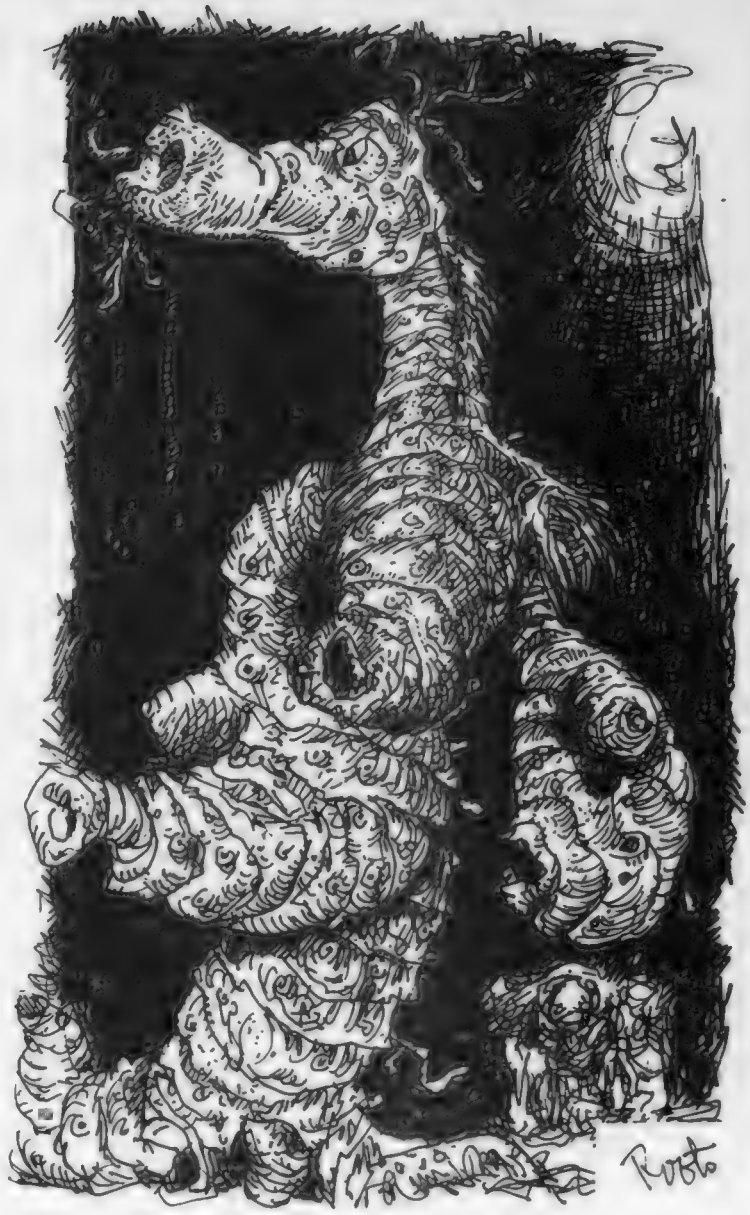
Pieces designed and sculpted by Berman for a chess set.

Pawns

Bishop



Selections from a recent



Berman Sketchbook

He introduced the novelty of photos of caricatures in clay for LIFE, when it was a humor magazine, and this led to his designing of the three-dimensional figure of a popeyed, mustachioed little man, ESKY, the Esquire dandy who became the magazine's trademark.

Following this were sculpture assignments for ad agencies, the Ballantine Ale series, some Hollywood movie titles, and a three-dimensional stop-motion film for the N.Y. World's Fair.

For five years Berman drew a weekly caricature for the Mark Hellinger column for King Features Syndicate, and at the same time he did regular political cartoons in water color for Collier's. Then, before he entered the service in World War II, he began a long series of caricatures for that magazine, of Nazi leaders, entitled 'The Guilty'. During his army career he worked for the Graphics Unit of the OSS in the India/Burma theatre. After the war there was another prestigious Berman series — this time of famous radio stars.

During the Geo-physical year, Berman designed a 6-foot World Globe, and formed a company to produce these in three-dimensional relief. The Life magazine Pictorial Atlas of the World, incidentally, was based on photos of the globe. The company was later sold to Rand McNally. Caricatures for 'Lithopinion' and 'Atlantic', and an exhibition of sculpture and ceramics in New York, were added to his schedule before he and his wife took off for Spain in 1971. Along with his constant sketching in that country, Sam has designed and produced several chess sets done in ceramics and sculpture.

Says Sam, "In the early part of my career I was very much concerned with pleasing editors and the public, with the result that technique always dominated over concept. Now, I don't give a damn, so drawing for me has become nice and easy and relaxed." Berman much prefers the free and easy style in which he draws nowadays to the very stylized drawings and caricatures which made him so famous. In our Illustrators Society conversations, Sam spoke of the most important message he'd like to get across to young artists: "If you have the kind of courage and self-sufficiency that Saul Steinberg, or Charles Saxon, have in dealing with art directors, then you'll be able to draw as freely as they do. Steinberg, incidentally, has so many sketch books that when an agency contacts him, he suggests that the art director come to the Steinberg studio to *select* something to fit the agency's purposes. In other words he never works on assignment." Easier said than done!! In conclusion, the variety of samples of Berman's work that we want to include here is so extensive that we think it's best to let pictures tell the rest of Sam's story!

This coming January 11th will be an interesting day, comics-wise, for several reasons. It will mark the start of the second newspaper strip produced by Art (The Born Loser) Sansom and his son, Chip — a humorous Western titled 'Dusty Chaps'. Also, it should demonstrate the almost unique ability of Art (who will be drawing both strips) to work in both an illustrative style and a comic style. For a number of years Art drew various strips, such as 'Chris Welkin', 'Martha Wayne', and 'Vic Flint' in a purely illustrative manner. Then, in 1965, he began 'The Born Loser' in a purely comic style which produced one of the very funniest strips in newspapers. Now, in January, his 'Dusty Chaps' style will be somewhat between the two. Very interesting. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, in his studio, he'll be continuing his hilarious 'Born Loser' style, and then on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, he'll become a little more illustrative with 'Dusty Chaps'. Following is a recent conversation which we had with Art and his son, Chip. The United Feature Syndicate will be distributing 'Dusty Chaps'.

Hurd: "The Born Loser" has been a very successful strip for a long time, Art. Why are you now taking on the chore of doing an additional strip?

Art: The original invitation to try a comic like "Dusty Chaps" came from Bobby Miller, the Managing Editor for Comics at United Media Enterprises. But more of that in a moment.

As you know, this is the era of country western music, and the dude ranch, and everything has been going in that direction for the last couple of years. There really has been nothing in the papers — comic strip-wise — that touches on this at all. So there's a lot to say on this theme — in a humorous fashion. My son, Chip, has been assisting me with the writing of "The Born Loser" for the past four or five years, so we've been working as a team during that period. Then last December Bobby Miller said, "You fellows must have another comic strip in you. The country western milieu seems to be very timely — how about trying something in that vein?"

We hadn't even considered another strip, but Bobby came out to Cleveland on a business trip, we had dinner with her, and she suggested we experiment with the idea.

This double chore does add pressure but it's a challenge, and I enjoy it. As you remember, I cut my art teeth at the Newspaper Enterprise Association, drawing various illustrative-type strips such as "Chris Welkin," "Martha Wayne," and "Vic Flint."

Hurd: I know our readers realize that you accomplished a unique feat in 1965 when you jumped from doing this type of feature to the very comic style you've been using in "The Born Loser" since then. And now, you're going part way back to that first style

in "Dusty Chaps" — a rare accomplishment! That dexterity reminds me of the late Roy Crane who was the most notable practitioner of the combination — humorous yet illustrative — style.

Art: The syndicate requested that the art work on "Dusty Chaps" not look too much like that on "The Born Loser" — which is the real reason I'm changing the style in the new strip.

Incidentally, I tried to find an artist, out here in the midwest, who could do the drawing, but found that it's an almost impossible task. We interviewed an artist at one of the local papers, a very capable commercial artist in a neighboring town, and we talked with artistic prospects at a Cleveland art school — to no avail. We realized that we could have searched in the N.Y. area but decided that the distance between here and there probably posed too much of a handicap.

Hurd: How are you dividing up the work on "Dusty Chaps"?

Art: Chip has done almost all of the writing because he cut his teeth writing material for "The Born Loser," and the syndicate has liked what he's done on that strip. We think much alike on the strips — he feeds me gags, we chew them out together, and come up with the finished product. After we had that talk with Bobby Miller, Chip named the strip, created the characters, wrote 90% of the gags. I do the art work, maybe add a gag here and there, and edit what he does. I sort of bulldogged him into coming into the cartooning profession with me, although he'll tell you that he did it of his own accord. I believe "Dusty Chaps" will be an extremely successful strip because we have, as we had when "The Born Loser" was started, a built-in audience. They know where we're coming from because they all know about this country-western bit — everybody is into cowboy hats, blue jeans, T-shirts, guitars, and so on. So the ingredients to capture an audience's attention are there. Incidentally, I plan that the art style will get a little more 'cartoony' as we go along — it probably is a bit too 'illustrative' at present.

Hurd: Why was it that none of the considerable number of artists you interviewed filled your requirements?

Art: Well, I can think of one example right off. I had high hopes for one editorial cartoonist whose work both Bob Metz, the President of the syndicate, and I, liked very much. But he was used to drawing very large and he froze completely when it came to reducing his drawing down to the comic strip size. We were also hopeful as regards another artist but we found out that he was almost tracing drawings from some other source.

Hurd: Should we mention something about the characters in "Dusty Chaps"?

Art: In a minute or two, I'd like to have Chip talk with you because he created them. Original intent with the new strip was to have *five* main characters

I'M TO SEE THE OWNER ABOUT A JOB HERE AT THE RANCH
MR. McDUFF OWNS THE "DUSTY CHAPS"... THAT'S HIM YONDER WITH THAT DUDE FROM NEW YORK.
BILL & CHIP SANSOM 1-11
© 1982 United Feature Syndicate, Inc
MR.. McDUFF ?
I'M McDUFF! HE'S THE GUEST.
The COW BELLE
VERY WELL, JENNINGS, YOU'LL DO AS OUR CLUB SINGER... WHAT'S YOUR FEE?
I GET $150 A NIGHT.
WHAT?! PAVAROTTI WOULDN'T CHARGE THAT MUCH!
DUSTY CHAPS DUDE RANCH
© 1982 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.
YEAH, BUT CAN HE DO ELVIS IMPERSONATIONS?
BILL & CHIP SANSOM 1-12
HOW'S YOUR FIRST NIGHT GOING, J.J.?
THE COW BELLE Featuring JERRY JEFF JENNINGS
PRETTY GOOD. I'VE SIGNED A COUPLE AUTO-GRAPHS ALREADY!
HEY, HOW ABOUT THAT!
© 1982 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.
YEAH, I LEFT 'EM ON THE BAR, IN CASE ANYBODY WANTS ONE.
1-13
BILL & CHIP SANSOM

who would share equal billing. However the syndicate felt that editors wanted *one* character that they could identify with, and that the other four could be supporting characters. So J. J. (Jerry Jeff) Jennings will be that principal character. But let Chip here tell you about him and about the others.

Chip: 'J.J.' is a country western singer-song writer who is, perhaps, a cross between a cowboy and a hippie.

He's a very happy-go-lucky, fun-loving type of guy who's only interested in his music. This fact is much to the consternation of the owner of the dude ranch, 'Deadly Ernest McDuff.' Ernest is a skinflint from the east, the only non-western character in the strip. He has bought the dude ranch merely to capitalize on the current western trend, to make as much money as he can while operating the ranch on a shoestring. Fortunately, his plans are often foiled by the other ranch hands who are a good mix of comic characters and well-intentioned, young urban cowboy types.

The other cronies of J.J. Jennings are 'Sally Calico' who is a very modern Dale Evans. She's a real cute, girl-next-door type but she's very responsible for the successful, behind-the-scenes, operation of the ranch. In other words she's the ranch hostess and manager.

Another main character is 'Chauncey Bigsky III'. He's the Indian character and is called 'Chance' for short. He's a very likable guy who does the books on the ranch, and is actually working his way through business school. He's a very intelligent American Indian who favors the modern, urban cowboy garb. The only hint of his heritage is the headband that he wears. He's not denying his background but he's not living in the past. Since he has a very good nature, and is doing the ranch books, he's allied with Sally in working against Deadly Ernest's plan to try and rob the guests blind.

Then there are two minor characters that we pushed a bit more into the background because the syndicate felt, as dad mentioned, that we should concentrate on one character to start with. One of these minor characters is 'Marshal Abel Erp', the local buffoon, the typical incompetent southern marshal. Of course,he is anything but able. He has a long line of ancestor sheriffs behind him, so he takes his job very seriously. Unfortunately for everybody else, he tends to think that problems should still be dealt with as his ancestors did back in the old days. And

THIS IS ALL I GET FOR MY SINGING ARTISTRY?

YES, AFTER THE DEDUCTIONS, THAT IS YOUR TAKE-HOME PAY.

WHERE ELSE COULD I GO WITH IT?

1-14

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McDUFF MUST BE THE BIGGEST SKINFLINT IN THE WHOLE WEST.

NOW YOU KNOW WHY WE NICKNAMED HIM DEADLY ERNEST.

HE'S THE TYPE OF GUY WHO'D MARRY DOLLY PARTON FOR HER MONEY.

1-15

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HOW! YOU...WORK-UM...ON... RANCH?...MAKE-UM... SPARE...WAMPUM?

ME...MARSHAL ABEL ERP...HOW-UM YOU...CALLED?

I AM CHAUNCEY BIGSKY III. ACTUALLY, I'M WORKING MY WAY THROUGH BUSINESS SCHOOL.

1-16

© 1982 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

HAD I KNOWN YOU LACKED THE QUALITIES YOU CLAIMED ON YOUR APPLICATION...

...I'D NEVER HAVE HIRED YOU, JENNINGS!

HECK, IF I'D HAD THOSE QUALITIES, I WOULDN'T'VE APPLIED HERE.

1-18

WHAT, AS SHERIFF, DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR STRONGEST QUALITY?
Hurd & CHIP 1-19
THE FACT THAT I'M NOT EASILY INFLUENCED!
YAWN
© 1982 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.
I THINK HE'LL DO NICELY!
YAWN
HOLD IT, "J.J", YOU'RE MOUNTING ON THE RIGHT SIDE!
DARN TOOTIN'! I TOL'JA I'D CATCH ON QUICK!
Hurd & CHIP 1-20
© 1982 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.
?
HOW DID WE EVER LOSE THE WEST?

he maintains attitudes like 'Indians are not to be trusted', which leaves him often at odds with Chance. So that often Chance will fall into the old 'Step'n Fetchit' routine, only to outwit Marshal Erp.

The other minor character is the ranch cook, Chuck Wagon. He's the clown figure in the strip.

Hurd: I know you graduated from Case-Western Reserve University in Cleveland with a double major in English and Business Management in 1974. How did that training lead to writing gags for two newspaper comic strips?

Chip: I'd always intended to get into some sort of writing and most of my studies were along that line. I went to Kenyon College since it's noted for its English courses. Unfortunately when I was about half-way through there, I began to feel that there wasn't any future in what I had lined up. That's why I transferred to Case-Western to pick up a business degree. After graduation I got a management job with the Equitable Life Assurance Society, but found out quite quickly that I wasn't the least bit interested in such a practical job.

After building up a bit of a nest egg, I quit and decided to try my hand at something more creative. Fortunately, just about that time Dad was talking about trying to come up with some help in his gag-writing — to break somebody in for the future so he could ease-off on his load. He had tried various people who had excellent credentials but they couldn't mesh with his style. So I figured the timing was perfect and decided to give it a shot myself — never thinking that anything would come of it. But everything just jelled and worked much better than either of us had dreamed. I seemed to fit in perfectly with his style. This was about 5 years ago that I started to write gags for 'The Born Loser'.

Hurd: Do you and your dad work side by side?

Chip: Well, for idea production I like working at night. Everything is quiet then, I can relax, and can concentrate on thinking up ideas. However we really have to work in concert on 'Dusty Chaps', so we are now working together quite a bit during the daytime. We have to talk over new ideas, and run them through the mill, because we are, at this point, a bit unsure of exactly where we're going to be going. In the evening we generally get together for maybe an hour, talking over the next day's schedule.

Hurd: I understand you've been doing a lot of research on the new strip.

Chip: Ironically neither of us has spent time in the west. Once when Dad was a little boy, and then again on his honeymoon, he went there, but I've never been. So I've been picking up every kind of magazine or book I can find, trying to come up with everything that will help me familiarize myself with the area. Watching TV westerns is part of the picture, and I'm immersing myself in everything that pertains to the west. ●

A Tribute to the Legendary 'MAD' Magazin/e Art Director, John Putnam, from C. C. Beck and Jerry DeFuccio.

By Harry Love

The H & B Animation Training Program

About three years ago Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera anticipated the need for new talent in the animation industry. Iwao Takamoto, their chief art director, agreed and the project was assigned to me. I was given all the freedom desired, except in no way was I to interfere with our daytime production. Which is why these were evening classes, three nights a week, at the Hanna-Barbera Studio.

The program was planned for animation artists who wished to improve their special talents, as well as beginners. Students were artists from Hanna-Barbera Studio, art school students and university students who studied at the college level but needed the realistic — "in studio" experience.

Our object was to train beginners starting at inbetween, with the prospect of getting them a job in a studio as soon as possible. Working in a studio a wide awake student can learn to be an assistant and eventually, animation, by diligent practice, patience and observation. Basically that was the plan - and it worked!

Instruction was mainly in animation but included layout, character design, story board and a working knowledge of camera and production in general. Hanna-Barbera supplied the animation desks, paper, pencils, pencil test camera and the other student facilities, gratis.

There were guest instructors, but mainly our regular staff who are profiled in this article. There were few lectures, mostly it was working at the animation drawing board. To "kick it off" our first instructors were Joe Barbera, Bill Hanna, and Iwao Takamoto. I co-ordinated the program and instructed when necessary. The instructors thoroughly enjoyed teaching, even though they received no compensation. Usually they would be my guests for dinner and drinks before class (charged to my H&B expense account).

I always emphasized to both instructors and students that I wanted them to enjoy these sessions, which all added to the relaxed and pleasant atmosphere for the class. Acceptance in the class meant I had to approve of their art portfolios and art school training. There was no charge to the students.

Hanna-Barbera Productions, Inc.

Harry Love

Attendance was excellent.

The results of our training program were extremely satisfying, way beyond our expectations. In three years over 400 students received instruction. At present well over 300 of these are now employed, many at Hanna-Barbera, but also at other animation studios. We recently discontinued our program due to our heavy production schedule here at H. & B.

Our program was a most rewarding pleasant experience. The following is a brief profile of our key instructors who deserve most of the credit and all of my thanks.

Dave Tendlar

Living and working in Los Angeles for the past thirteen years has been a rewarding experience. I've really forgotten what an overcoat and galoshes are for, not to mention hats, scarves and earmuffs. They were required dress back East. I started in the animation business way back there, when Popeye the Sailor first hit the movie screen with Betty Boop as his side kick. The old sailor wore well. He never gets older.

I spent many years with Paramount and C.B.S. writing, directing, designing and animating. I have wound up with ten years at Hanna-Barbera Production in Hollywood. At that studio, I was an instructor of animation in the training class for aspiring young artists. This too was a rewarding experience for me. Our supervisor, Harry Love, was always present to give us his experience and keep a tight ship.

It was hard work . . . but lots of fun too.

Sketches by Dave Tendlar

Bob Singer

Bob Singer

After graduating from the Art Center School, I began my career in animation with the Shamus Culhane Studios in 1956. Since then I have worked in many of the Hollywood studios including Warner Brothers, U.P.A. Pictures and Hanna-Barbera. Although I started as a background painter, I branched out into other areas of design including story-boards, layout, character design and presentation art. One of my most enjoyable assignments has been as an instructor in H & B's animation training program. The facing and solving of problems in animation has proved stimulating and rewarding for the students and instructors alike, and the lack of either tuition or instructor fees helped to create an atmosphere that did not feel at all like a "school".

Animation drawings,Pages 24-28,
copyrighted by Hanna-Barbera Inc.

Presentation Sketch by Bob Singer

Hal Ambro by Ambro

Hal Ambro

My introduction to the animation business was in the early thirties at the Romer Grey Studio. After spending some time and money studying art and animation I acquired a job at the Chas. Mintz Studios in Hollywood. Night school and weekend at Art Center School studying anatomy and life drawing became part of my life. In 1939 I was hired at the Walt Disney Studio. The first picture I worked on was "Fantasia" There was great activity at the studio at that time. Opportunities existed so one could work with some of the best talent in the industry. Story board, animation, technical direction of Air Force training films made an interesting diversified training. I spent a total of 25 years working on numerous feature films. Ten years followed at Chuck Jones and other commercial studios. Most memorable were the Chuck Jones Specials about Kipling stories. The last four years have been an enjoyable and rewarding experience on "The Story of Heidi", a totally animated theatrical feature for Hanna-Barbera.

Jay Sarbry

After three years at Chouinard's Art School, Disney Studios accepted me for their training class and eventual employment. Way back in 1940 just getting through those "hallowed gates" of Disney's was really something!

Animation at Columbia's old "Screen Gems" Studio, followed the Disney period.

The early days of TV commercials beckoned, and many years were happily spent at Swift Chaplin Productions doing Hamms Bear, Tony The Tiger, Speedy Alka-Seltzer, and on, and on, and on . . .

I started animation at Hanna-Barbera 13 years ago. What happened to the time? See what happens when you're havin' fun!

Animation Sketch by Jay Sarbry

Presentation Sketches by Bob Singer

Raul Salaiz

Raul Salaiz graduated from Phoenix College in 1958, served in the Air Force in Europe where he studied at Cambridge University. After the service he worked as Assistant Advertising Manager for "Wards" in Phoenix, while taking classes at Arizona State. He worked as Art Director for "Starline Company" Graphics in San Diego, California. He later worked for a design studio in Encino before entering the H & B animation class. He worked for 2 years at Hanna- Barbera on "Heidi's Song". He is now at Marvel Productions working on the "Pink Panther Series".

Mike Lessa

After taking all the technical arts in high school, I had a year and a half of fine arts in college. I left college to work on a local handbook doing everything from research to paste-up, illustration and layout.

While I was working on this book, I was accepted in the H & B animation class in April 1978. By July 1978, I was employed at the studio as an Assistant Animator. I started assisting Harry Love in the class at this time. Since then I have worked on Saturday morning productions for a year and a half, and one year on the feature film "Heidi's Song".

Barry Cook

Upon entering the training program in September 1978, I was instructed in inbetweens and assistant animation. Four months later I was employed at Hanna-Barbera and worked on the Saturday Morning Line Up until January 1980. I then began work on the feature "Heidi's Song" as an ass t. animator.

The training program proved to be a solid foundation, with practical applications for starting work in the animation industry.

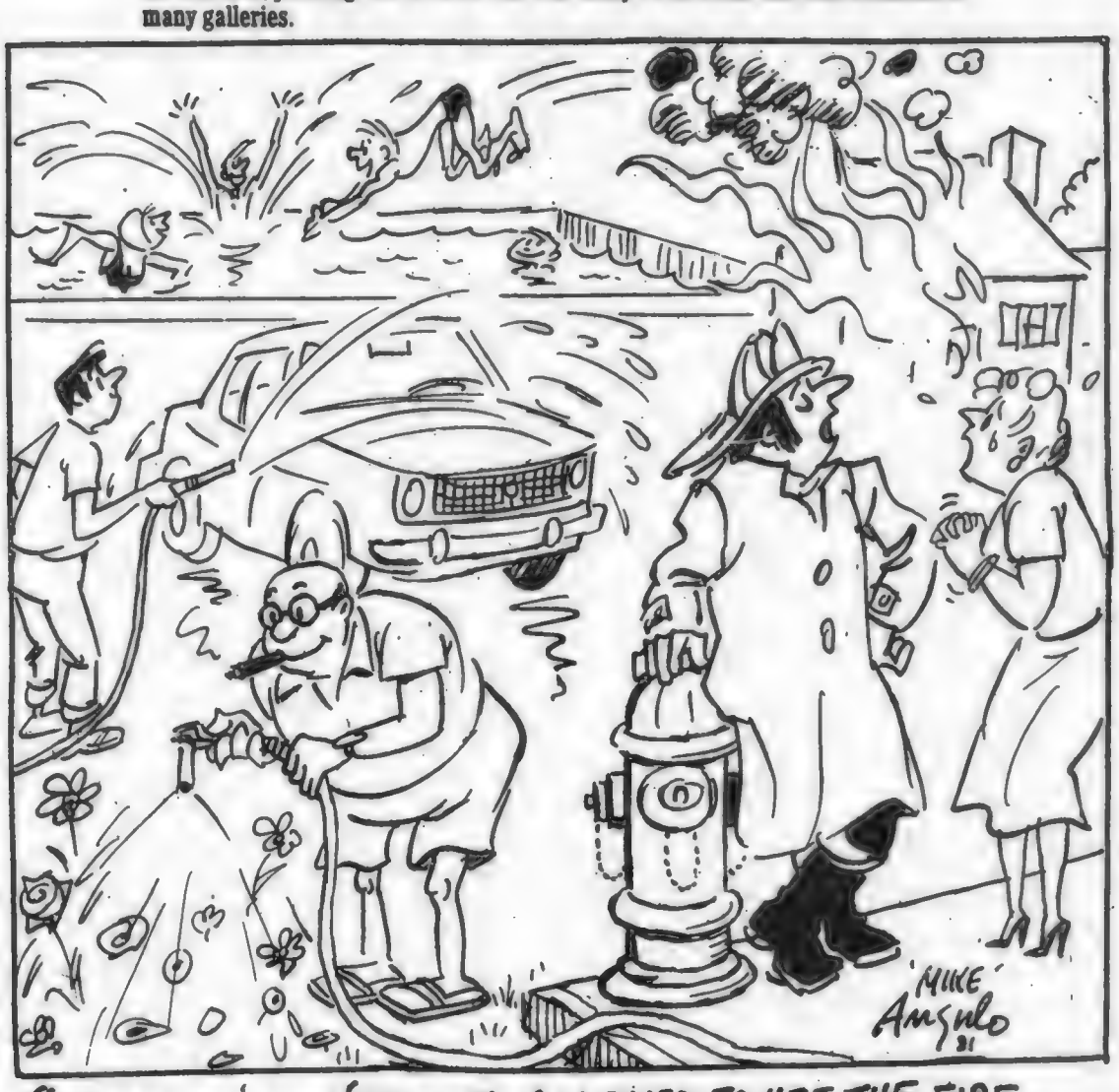
Marty Murphy

Marty Murphy was born in 1933. Raised in Chicago, Marty moved to California after serving a stint in the Army at Fort Ord. He attended the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts: Chouinard Art Institute, Art Center College and Otis Art Institute along the way. Murphy, a Los Angeles resident, has been doing magazine gags for over 10 years and sells to such markets as Playboy, Cosmopolitan, Playgirl, National Enquirer and The Critic. Marty also works in the animation industry beginning with "Mr. Magoo" and lately designing the characters for the animated television show "Wait 'Til Your Father Gets Home".

PRELIMINARY SKETCHES FOR "WAIT TIL YOUR FATHER GETS HOME"

Welcome Back, Mike!!

RETURNS. Emidio (Mike) Angelo, 77, returns to the pages of the *Main Line TIMES* this week with his special brand of cartooning. Mike worked as a cartoonist for the *TIMES* in the mid-40's and again in the late 1960's and has been a nationally syndicated cartoonist for among others the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. While at the *Inquirer*, he created *Emily and Mabel* cartoon feature which has been circulated in over 100 newspapers nationwide. Since 1970, Mike has concentrated on his first love, painting. His artwork has won many awards and has been exhibited in many galleries.



"SORRY MA'AM, WE'RE NOT ALLOWED TO USE THE FIRE HYDRANT FOR FIRES!"

DON MARTIN

It seems that the creative ability in the family of famed MAD cartoonist, Don Martin, isn't confined to the masculine side. Don's wife, Norma Haimes Martin, has had a show of her soft sculpture, has published several scholarly articles on art therapy and psychology, has produced a book, and has written the following most informative story about the methods of husband, Don.

AN INTERVIEW WITH DON MARTIN: MAD MAGAZINE'S MADDEST ARTIST

by

Norma Haimes

It has been almost a quarter of a century since Don Martin began his career with *Mad Magazine*. Through the years his work has delighted a multitude of loyal fans with its unique brand of humor. His artistic and expressive mastery of pen and ink has been praised by colleagues and knowledgeable critics. Martin is a shy man who has been quick to perceive and illustrate the foibles of humankind, while being sensitive and caring about others at the same time. A Floridian for over twenty years, he lives with his second wife, Norma Haimes, in a sprawling house that is surrounded by lush tropical plants and sheltering trees. The cartoonist's studio, separated from his home by a breezeway, overlooks an enclosed pool. Beyond is a range of mango and avocado trees which scent the humid Southern air. Dressed casually in shorts and T-shirt, Martin spends long hours at his drawing board, while bittersweet strains of jazz form a faint background to the sounds of his pencils or pens. The 6′ tall and ruggedly handsome cartoonist is modest about his success, retreating behind a barrier of silence with strangers and fans alike. Through this interview, Don Martin shares his thoughts and reminiscences about his profession and relates his progress and growth as a cartoonist.

Haimes: You have been well known as a cartoonist for some time. When you are introduced to people, do you feel that they expect you to say or do funny things?

Martin: I don't know exactly what they expect, but it is something like that. They expect me to talk more, to say funny things, maybe to be witty. I think they expect me to be a little zany and outlandish. I don't know if they are disappointed, but I think that sometimes people are surprised at how quiet I am. Actually I am afraid of being out in the spotlight. It's just part of the way I am with any situation. I start to feel stagefright, or something like that. I would rather not be in the spotlight and yet, I like being there very much. Who doesn't? The same thing happens with autographs. I like it when people ask me for my autograph, but at the same time I shy away from the experience. When you work alone there is need for some kind of acclaim. I think that if you do anything creative, you have to show it to somebody. You have to get feedback for one thing. Everyone needs encouragement. You need that whether you are writing, drawing, or playing an instrument. To a certain extent you do it for yourself, but you have to get some acclaim for the creative work you do, some acknowledgement.

Haimes: Yes, that's true. Another truism is that the kind of childhood we have is supposed to influence the way we are when we grow up. Considering the mayhem that graces your cartoons, what kind of a childhood did you have?

Martin: I was born in Paterson, New Jersey and raised in a nearby town called Brookside. My father was a salesman of school supplies and during the depression he was able to buy a twelve-room house in the country outside of Morristown. The house sat on a tree-covered hill and there was a trout stream in front. The area is suburban territory now, but it was very rural then. All the time I was growing up — from 1931 to 1950 — it was a real country place. There were dirt roads and our schoolhouse had four rooms with two grades in each one. When I graduated from the 8th grade, thirteen people were in my class. Winters we could sleigh ride down the street and we never worried about cars. It was a beautiful area, lush and pretty, with farms, hills, and woods. I don't know any other place quite like it. It wasn't rugged country at all. Even the hills were all soft, somehow. There were wild apple trees and we pulled up watercress in the springtime. Summers there were springs running in the woods and the whole community used to swim in a dammed up stream — a mud hole. I always had a dog and it would go with me on my long hikes in the woods. All the time I was living in the country doing all this country boy stuff and also drawing cartoons. My friend, Owen, and I had a newspaper one time. He and I were the only ones who ever saw this paper. I used to do the illustrations for it. We were about twelve or thirteen years old so the paper con-

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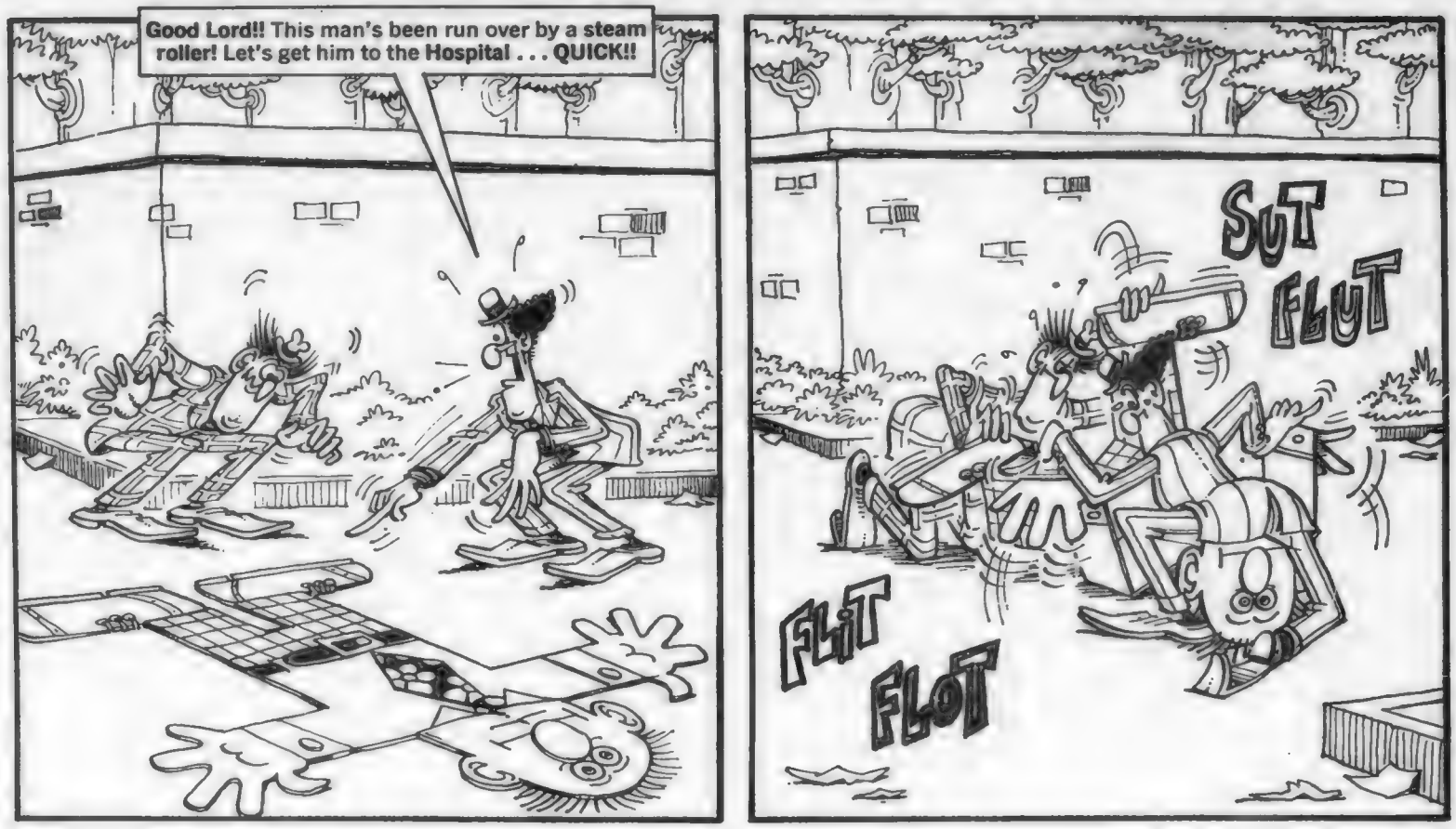
ONE TUESDAY MORNING



tained things of interest to us. If a weasel got into the hen house and killed all the chicks we would write about that. There would be a weasel's picture and we probably gave him a name.

Haimes: How did you reproduce it?

Martin: We wrote it out by hand. There was one copy per issue. I had an illustrated diary, too, in my early teens. It was filled with drawings of things I had done. We didn't have that much to do either. A country store with some gas pumps outside and a post office were the center of town. A group of us teenagers used to hang around the phone booth in the store. That's what we would do after school, afternoon upon afternoon, hang around and kibutz. I had a set illustration for that. Every time we did that I would draw this picture again and insert it in the diary — "hangin' out at the corner."

Haimes: It sounds to me like you had an idyllic childhood. When you were young were you more interested in humorous films than comic books?

Martin: I didn't read comic books much. Batman and the Spirit were favorites, but most of the other comic book characters passed me by. I liked the drawings in the Walt Disney comic books and I also liked comic strips. *Krazy Kat* was a favorite of mine, so were *Bringing Up Father, Polly and Her Pals,* and *Toonerville Folks.* In the '50's, Bugs Bunny and other animated cartoon characters became very funny. I enjoyed the Road Runner, Sylvester the Cat and Daffy Duck. That group was part of Warner's cartoons and they became sillier and further out, especially the Road Runner, the Coyote and the Tasmanian Devil. Sylvester the Cat is the funniest cartoon character. In live film I liked the Three Stooges and Laurel and Hardy. Hardy made me laugh the most, with his irritated and exasperated looks when he snatched things away from Stanley. He is always burning up and disgusted with Stanley, coming on like he can do everything so well and screwing things up worse. Hardy is sillier looking too. He was so big and he wore that small hat that didn't fit him right. Then there were those little black curls hanging down over his forehead which were funny.

Haimes: Do you think the earlier strips would be as good today, with the current space limitations imposed on comic strip artists?

Martin: I don't think *Bringing up Father* would make it because it had a great deal of detail in it. Maybe *Krazy Kat* would, because of the simple and bold drawings. The comics were better when they were larger. I don't know what I would do if I had to do one because I use quite a lot of detail. If I did a strip I would have to draw differently. I would have to simplify so that I could do it faster for one thing. I sometimes wonder how Captain Klutz would work as a strip. He is pretty popular in the books that I have done. Kids like him a lot.

Haimes: What made you decide to become a cartoonist? When I knew you, way back when we were starving art students, you were a painter.

Martin: As I said, I always drew cartoons, beginning when I was five and all through school. My older brother drew comic books when we were kids, and I used to copy his stuff. When I was in elementary school I drew pictures for the school newspaper. I got good marks because my reports were original; they were filled with my drawings, but the actual studying was slight. If I didn't know how to draw I would have failed in school. Drawing pulled me through a lot of situations. It came easily to my brother and me. It was taken for granted that we could do it and I don't think either one of us worked too hard at it. There were times as I was growing up, like in high school, that I took drawing so much for granted I never thought that I would pursue it as a career. I thought of other things that I would be doing, but I never thought I would follow this thing that I could do so easily and well, until I made up my mind to go to art school in Newark, New Jersey.

Haimes: Which school was that?

Martin: The Newark School of Fine and Industrial Art. I went there for three years. The first two I was in the illustration courses because I was interested in cartooning. Then I got interested in painting and I took painting and drawing classes. After that I studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia for one year.

Haimes: Did you feel you had to go through fine art training?

Martin: No. I wanted to study fine art. I had forgotten about being a cartoonist and doing commercial art. I had decided I was going to be a painter, so after I finished school I had different kinds of jobs just to bring in some money, while I lived at home and painted.

Haimes: How do you feel about the work you did at the Academy?

Martin: I think my work was pretty good. It was free because I was doing what I felt. The paintings and drawings were usually of depressing subjects. A lot of my work contained grotesque figures, like the ones in paintings by Bosch and Bruegel. I think the habits that I developed then of drawing what I felt, resulted in the way I draw cartoons. I draw cartoons to be funny. The figures are meant to be comical, that's why the distortions are the way they are. The long face, the long jaw, the eyes close together, they strike me as being funny and they make me smile. Apparently they make a lot of other people smile too. The way the feet bend on my figures and all my other distortions come from my painting experiences.

Haimes: You mean you were able to express yourself in cartooning because you learned to express yourself in painting and drawing?

Martin: That's right.

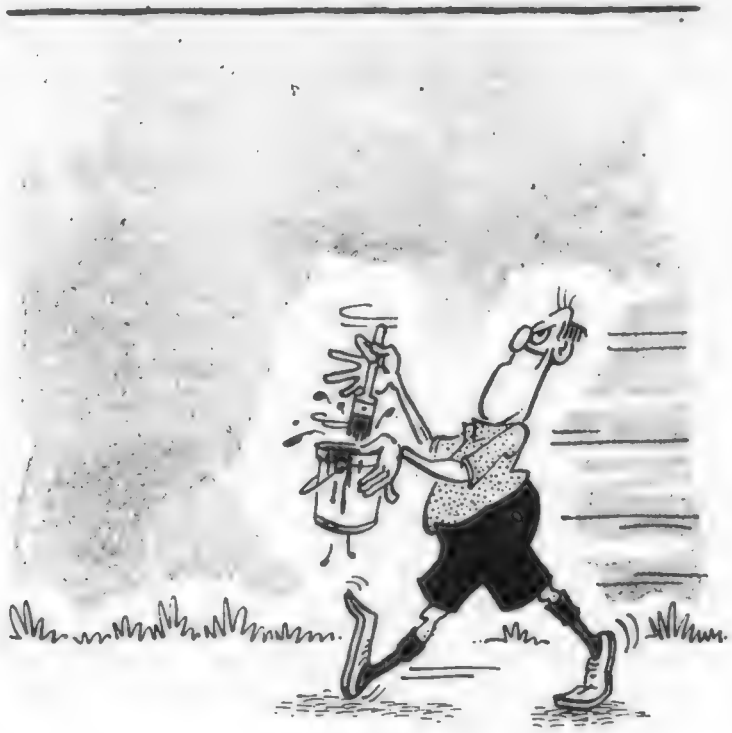
Haimes: What made you go back to cartooning?

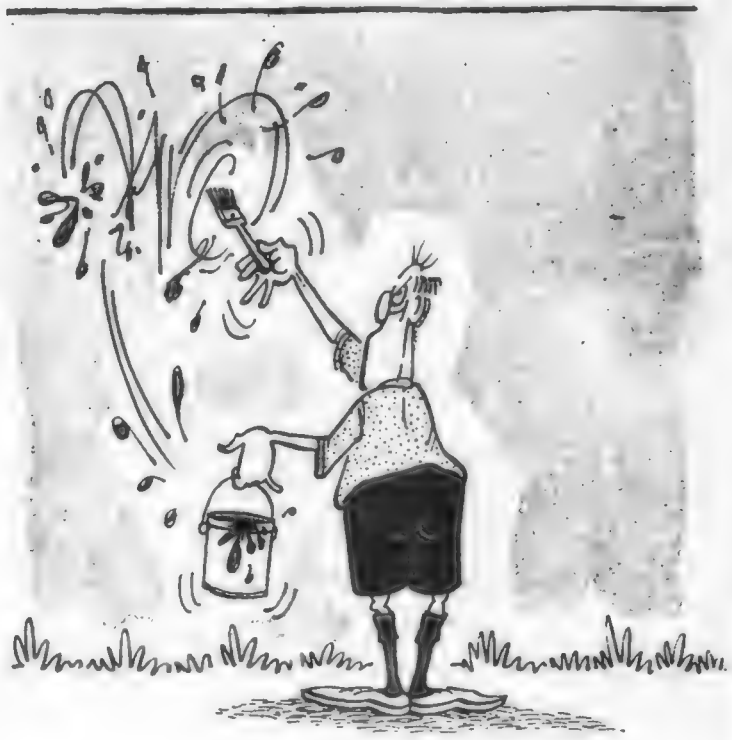
Martin: After the Academy I stayed with my family in New Jersey. First I worked in a framing store, then in the display department of a store, and all the while I was painting and drawing. However, I realized that I wanted to make a living at art, so I went back to doing humorous drawing. They weren't gag cartoons. They were very flat, design type drawings that I did with a crow quill pen, using very thin lines. They were humorous and I had some success with them. I used jazz music as a theme frequently and I got some jobs for jazz record covers. A few science fiction magazines were interested in my work too. I did spots for *Galaxy* and *Fantasy and Science Fiction.* When I got a job in a commercial art studio I moved in to New York City. I took an art studio job because I wasn't making enough money by just free-lancing. I also thought the experience of working in an art studio would be good for me. When I started to get interested in advertising design, I got a job down on Canal Street — Lafayette and Canal. The guy I was working for had a work space arrangement with some printing brokers. He liked my cartoons so he got me a couple of little jobs, one was for the printing broker. I did some flyers for them that were very successful. The most important thing that happened down there was that *Mad Magazine* was just a few blocks up the road on Lafayette Street in their old offices. One day my boss said to me, "Why don't you go up to *Mad Magazine* on your lunch hour, someday. Show them your portfolio."

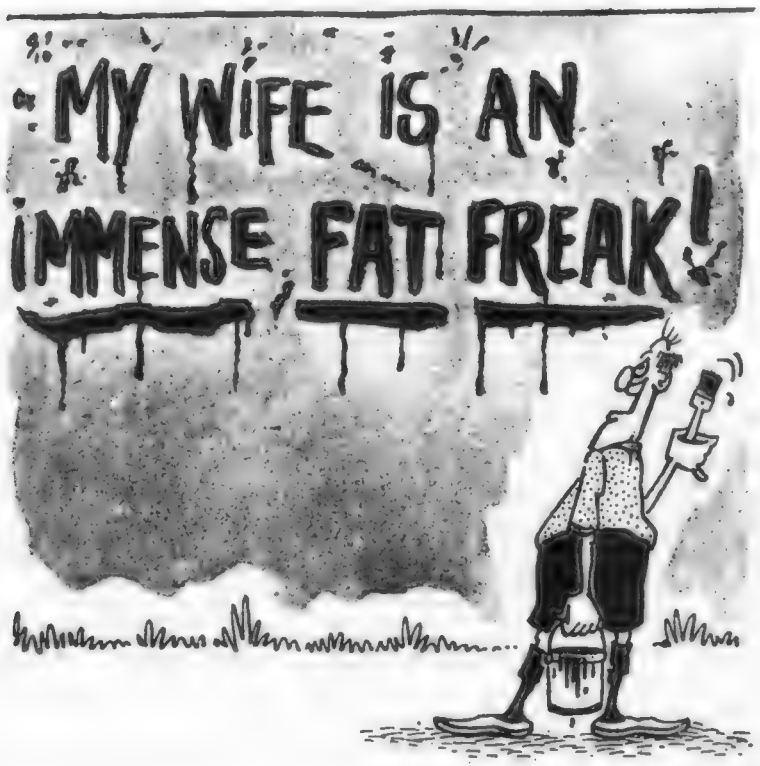
Haimes: How did you know about *Mad*? That it might be a potential market for your work?

Martin: Everybody knew about it. It was *Mad Comics* at that time and it was very popular. I had no idea what I was going to do for them. Actually when I went up there, they had just changed from the comics to the magazine. I think I got in on the first issue of the magazine.

THE INDIGNANT HUSBAND







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Anyway, there I was with this portfolio of drawings that really had no relation to either *Mad Magazine* or *Mad Comics,* except that my drawings were funny and *Mad* was funny. That was it. Al Feldstein had just taken over as editor and he said the same thing. He liked the drawings, but there was just no place for them in *Mad Magazine*. They didn't fit. I had that kind of thing happen to me before, when I first took my portfolio around to the magazines and advertising agencies. I always got a good response, even though I didn't get much work. I would show the art director my portfolio and he would show it to the next guy down the hall. They would show them and everybody would be laughing and saying how good it was. Then they would come back and say, "Gee, we don't know where we can use this. It's really great and I'll take your name . . ." But I was lucky. I got a job the first time I went in to New York. And the positive reactions to my work made me feel good. I don't know if I would have gotten discouraged quickly or not, if my work was always rejected. I never got the opportunity to get discouraged. The same thing happened with *Mad Magazine* when I went up there with my portfolio of these designs. Al Feldstein liked them and he showed them around to everybody. They all liked them. He suggested that I try something, an article geared toward *Mad Magazine*, so he could see what my work for them would be like. I went home and did something on etiquette and I did a take-off on something called "Norman Vincent Peale Answers Your Questions." The drawing in the sketches that I did was a lot looser than my portfolio drawings. They were more like a cartoon. I had done some cartoons for *Metronome Magazine*, which was a jazz magazine, that were in this looser, freer style of drawing. *Mad* bought what I did and I got an agreement, a contract to do some pages. Al Feldstein stressed that I should keep the drawings loose. He didn't like the tight stuff that I had shown him. He wanted them loose, so I really loosened up. When I drew I scribbled all over the paper. Everything had a zillion speed lines around it. When I brought the work in, Feldstein looked at it and his whole face and body dropped. He said, "What am I going to do with this?!?" It was time for all the work to be handed in to the engraver and my work was unusable. I went kind of numb. It was a great opportunity for me and I had muffed it. I said, "Give me another crack at it." He agreed to that and I went home and stayed up all night drawing a couple of panels in the style that I draw in now. I went back to Al with them and he said, "That's what I want." So I went home and finished the other pages.

Haimes: You mean to say, that your style — the one you have now — evolved in that one night?

Martin: Yes. That's just how it happened. I was very elated when the work was accepted. I haven't missed an issue since then. That was over twenty years ago. In the beginning, when I would bring my work up, everyone would stand around laughing hysterically at it. I would be laughing so hard, also, that the tears would be running down my cheeks. It really felt great and I would try to be cool. It's like laughing at your own jokes and I didn't want to do that. But I couldn't help it because I felt so good. Here were five guys standing around looking at a picture and really breaking up as if someone had told them a joke. That could have kept me going. They wouldn't even have had to pay me.

Haimes: Were there any cartoonists that influenced your particular style of drawing?

Martin: When I was in high school I liked all the *Saturday Evening Post* cartoonists, especially John Gallagher and Tom Henderson. Both those guys were "Big Foot" cartoonists and they used very silly gags. I also liked Virgil Partch because he drew things that were kind of outlandish. I don't think that the way they drew has anything to do with the way I draw. Maybe Virgil Partch does, in that you can draw any way you want. In Newark my cartoons were more like illustrations, since I liked Albert Dorne. I see a lot of Charlie Chaplin in my figures, especially the legs and feet. The way Chaplin's heels come together and the feet point out at right angles is similar to what I draw. Also, his pants bagged around his ankles. My figures have the same shape — the classic Chaplin front view. It's not conscious but that's the way I draw the front view of a figure. I see it there and I used to love Chaplin when I was a kid. As far as cartoonists go, I liked Saul Steinberg a great deal and I still do. When I was drawing those flat, design type cartoons that I described before, Steinberg was on my mind. Hirschfeld's design quality also influenced me.

Haimes: Do you think that cartooning is a fine art?

Martin: No, I don't think so. I wouldn't put cartoonists in the same bag as master painters like Picasso or Rembrandt.

Haimes: How would you classify cartooning? Don't you think that some cartoonists are great draftsmen? Isn't there some great gag and comic strip art?

Martin: I think Steinberg could be considered a great cartoon artist. You can sit and look at a picture he has done and then come back and look at it over and over again. In a cartoon strip you get the message out of it immediately. *Krazy Kat* is a little better than most, but I still don't think it is on the same plane as a Steinberg drawing. Perhaps if Herriman had done single pictures without the content, the cat and dog, they would be art. Herriman is very imaginative, but he is telling a story in his comic strip, whereas Steinberg drawings can just be pictures. Maybe that's where it gets into art, when you take the content out and still have a picture that you can look at and it means something to you. There are people who can draw very well that can't draw funny pictures, just like there are great writers who can't write funny things. Maybe Michelangelo couldn't do a funny picture if he wanted to.

Haimes: Your sense of humor is very distinctive. It has been defined in various ways, from bizarre to grotesque, in books and magazine articles. How do you feel about these interpretations of your humor?

Martin: When I started in the '50s sick humor was just coming in and it was something that had to do with people being mutilated. They were flattened, blown up and distorted in various ways. I did a lot of those kinds of gags. That kind of humor has been around for a long time in animated cartoons, like *Tom and Jerry*. Now sick humor was mostly jokes about taboo subjects, things that we were not supposed to make fun of, like multiple sclerosis, iron lungs or amputees. Those jokes also had a lot of violence, blood letting or mutilation, which is where I come in, I guess. That was alright with me. There are some people who get their gags by reading through the newspaper. These people want to make some social comment along with being funny. They want to satirize. The way I write gags is the same as the way I draw. I am just trying to be funny. I don't usually make much of a comment socially or politically. It's a silly sense of humor. I love Laurel and Hardy's slapstick and nonsense. Doors slamming in peoples faces are fun. Pies in the face are fun.

Haimes: What would you prefer your particular style of humor be called? Zany? Silly?

Martin: Funny. That's all, funny silly.

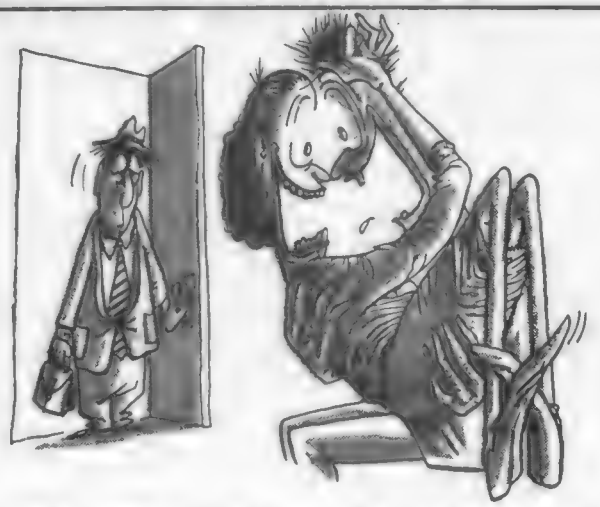
Haimes: Do you have a special way of working to develop gags?

Martin: It's mostly a matter of concentration for me and I have trouble with that. I make a list of names by going through the TV Guide or an encyclopedia index. Then I read through the list

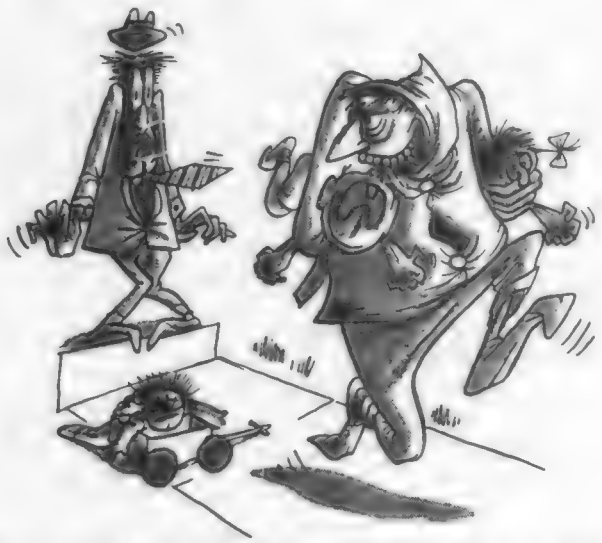
ALFRED E. NEUMAN ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

PROBLEM:

Two weeks ago, I was laid off my job . . .



I came home to find my wife in the arms of another man . . .



As I stumbled from the house, I saw my children being carried away by some fiend . . .

On the way to summon the police, I was beaten and robbed . . .

I am cold, hungry and thoroughly depressed. I sometimes say to myself, "If I knew how to tie a hangman's knot, I would end it all!" What should I do?—Anxious

SOLUTION:

PICTURES BY DON MARTIN

Simple! A hangman's knot is tied thusly: right over left, left around right, through and under. ¾ hemp is suggested. Good luck!

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and try to come up with some kind of funny situation or a funny picture. I like to think of the funny picture first, which would be the gag, and then go back and get a situation that would bring that about. The gags come out sillier that way. They make less sense and I like to do that. I like to make no sense. I have heard some comics and other gag writers say that creating gags is like a well. They believe that you have some sort of well in your mind and that it can run dry, but I don't think that's so. I think it is an ability that is there, to put things together in such a way that they come out funny. It's a matter of keeping in touch with that mechanism, whatever it is. I can't always do that and if I start worrying about whether I am going to be able to do it or not, I won't be able to do it at all. It has always been difficult for me to write gags. It is really work. You have to sit down alone and try to get in to it, starting from anywhere. A list of names. Anything. It's free association and you keep on going into your mind, going anywhere that your ideas take you. You have got to keep on going. You can't stop and start feeling bad that you haven't thought of a funny idea in five minutes. It helps me to loosen up if I look at cartoons by other people. I like to look through *B.C.* books. Sometimes funny movies can also be inspiring that way, Laurel and Hardy or Red Skelton. I used to love Red Skelton's television show. I used to get gags inspired by some of his stuff. I liked his style and there is no one comparable to him now.

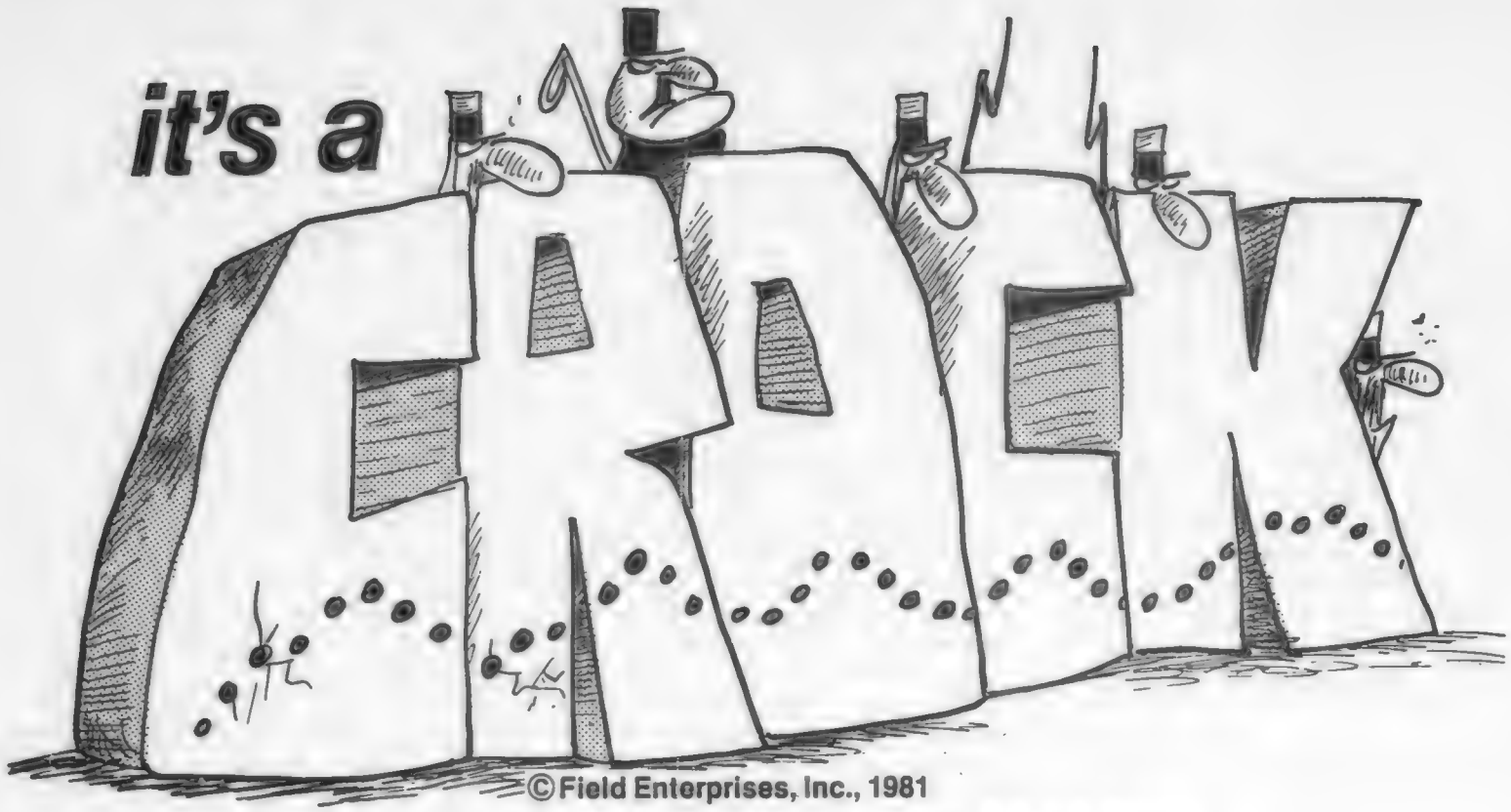
Haimes: You recently read Mark Jacobs' book of interviews with cartoonists, *Jumping Up and Down On the Roof, Throwing Bags of Water On People,* and the fact that a number of the cartoonists experienced work problems similar to yours impressed you.

Martin: Yes. I used to be bothered because it was difficult for me to get ideas. I thought it was just me — that something was wrong with me and that everyone else was doing it better or having it easier. I am sure that there are people who do it better than others, faster than others, or easier than others. However, after reading the interviews in Jacobs' book, I see that struggling to get ideas is a common problem. I used to get bogged down in worrying about why it was so difficult. There is a definite discomfort for me and I have to struggle through the rough drawings. It goes easy after that.

Haimes: This summer your eleventh paperback book of cartoons will be published. All of them have been very successful. How did you get started doing these books?

Martin: I had a friend, Eugene Rosenblum, who was a very funny guy. I was writing gags with him and we decided to try to do a comic book together. We wrote a lot of material, I sketched it out, then, instead of laying out the sketches in a comic book format, with six panels or so to a page, I drew each picture on an 8½ x 11 page, the same way I submit rough ideas to *Mad Magazine*. In order to make a presentation for the comic book people, I decided that I would paste these drawings back to back and then put them in a loose-leaf binder. I realized, when I looked through the thing, that what I had done was make a dummy of a book. It just happened that at that time I was corresponding with E. L. Doctorow, who was working as an editor for *Mad* books at Signet. He was interested in my doing something special, like a children's book. I thought it would be ideal to ask him if he would take a look at the material that Eugene and I had put together. He liked it, they bought it and the book was a success. I will be starting on my twelfth book soon. Approximately seven million copies of my first ten titles have been sold. Those are domestic sales only. There are over a dozen foreign editions of most of my books. For some reason, my books and cartoons go over very big in Germany.

..To be continued..



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by Bill Rechin & Don Wilder

Don Wilder says:

The legion of CROCK and his unsavory crew of characters marched onto the comic pages November 1975. Since then everything has gone beautifully ....we're ten years ahead of schedule, we pick up 200 newspapers each month and Hollywood calls three times a week. Well....maybe things haven't gone quite that good but we've had a lot of fun with CROCK for the past five years that Bill and I have been doing the strip. We both want to share the experience of doing a syndicated comic strip with many of the young readers and, hopefully, give them a few tips on the writing and drawing aspects of this business.

As I said previously, CROCK started in 1975 when Brant Parker set his jug of BLUE NUN down and told me he had a premise for a comic strip which involved a group of legionnaires set in a grubby desert located in an even grubbier fort. Since I had consumed the other half of the jug, I said, "That's great, Brant!" (aren't you glad his name isn't Scott?) and I agreed to create the characters and humor for CROCK. Brant knew he would not be able to draw CROCK due to his commitment to draw THE WIZARD OF ID. As the cliche' goes, "fate stepped in" and Bill Rechin, one of the most talented cartoonists in the country agreed to draw CROCK. Bill brought his years of experience not only as a former nationally syndicated cartoonist, but, also as an art director and vice-president of a major graphics studio in Washington, D.C. Originally, the three of us started CROCK in 1975 but since 1977 Bill and I have done CROCK as co-owners of the strip.

I also write the 'Goosemyer' strip for the Field Newspaper Syndicate.

Next I'd like to take time to give you a bit of my background, so if anyone wants to go to the restroom, now's the time! I have a BS degree in Art, did many magazine cartoons and chased broads in my early years. I was more successful in the first two.

CROCK

by Bill Rechin & Don Wilder

L to R: Wilder & Rechin

Getting back to the early days when I was creating the characters and humor for CROCK, I put a lot of emphasis on the latter. Humor is foremost, but strong characterization is imperative to any successful comic strip. Not only are characters important, but, also, the names you give them. Names reflect a certain image in people's minds and must fit the individual's personality. From a writer's viewpoint, I strongly feel the writing must carry the strip. Even with Bill's excellent artwork, CROCK would not survive the competition without good gags. Humor is difficult to define and even more difficult to teach; however, you do have a few basic rules which can help the beginning cartoonist. Humor is merely someone's way of looking at something. You learn to juggle your thoughts, reverse and switch expressions and write down every funny word or cliche' you read. Everyone has heard of the guy running into a crowded movie theater yelling, "Fire!". Isn't it funnier to think of the guy who runs into the crowded fire station yelling, "Movie!"? Funny-sounding words are critical, too. For example, "banana" is funnier sounding than "pencil," isn't it? Read a lot and observe and notice what people say and do around you. People are funny creatures.

Each of your characters should have their own distinct personality. This personality should always remain constant and you never use a gag that doesn't fit your character, no matter how good the gag. For example, we would never have CROCK doing a good deed unless it suited his ulterior

CROCK by Bill Rechin & Don Wilder

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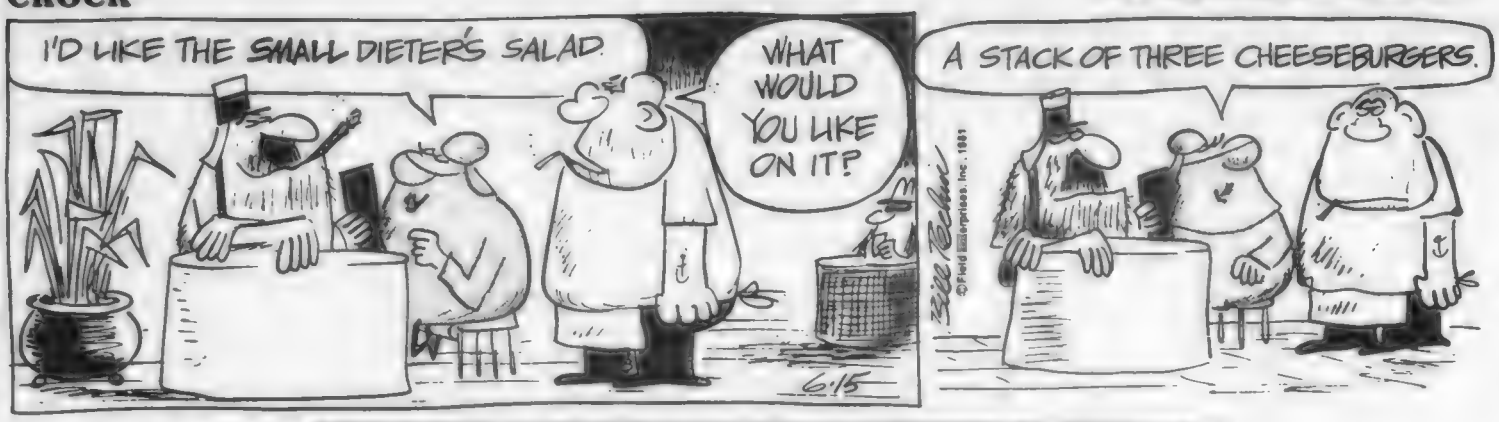
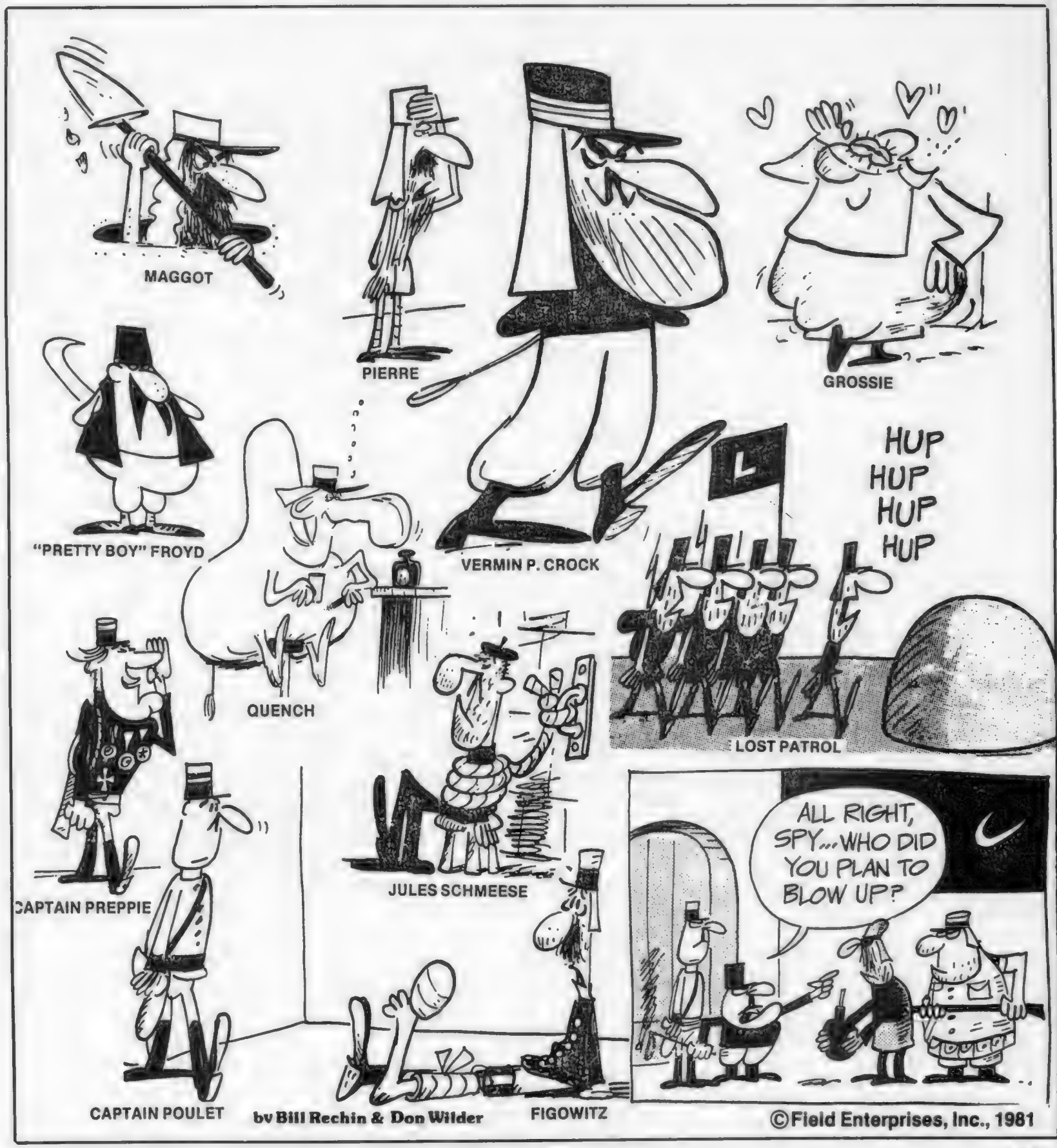


CROCK L to R: Wilder & Rechin by Bill Rechin & Don Wilder

OH, MIGHTY NEBOOKANEZZER, I'VE RETURNED FROM A TEN THOUSAND-MILE PILGRIMAGE SEEKING TRUTH...
WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE?
CHANGE YOUR OIL.
©Field Enterprises, Inc. 1981

The meanest commandant under the Sahara sun, Crock leads his wacky misadventurers into a legion of laughs as they circle the sand in search of the enemy. From Quench, the carbonated camel to "Pretty Boy" Froyd, they're the most unlikely group of outcasts to ever hit the oasis.



motives. It doesn't bother CROCK to step on Figowitz's leg because, to CROCK that's what legs are for.

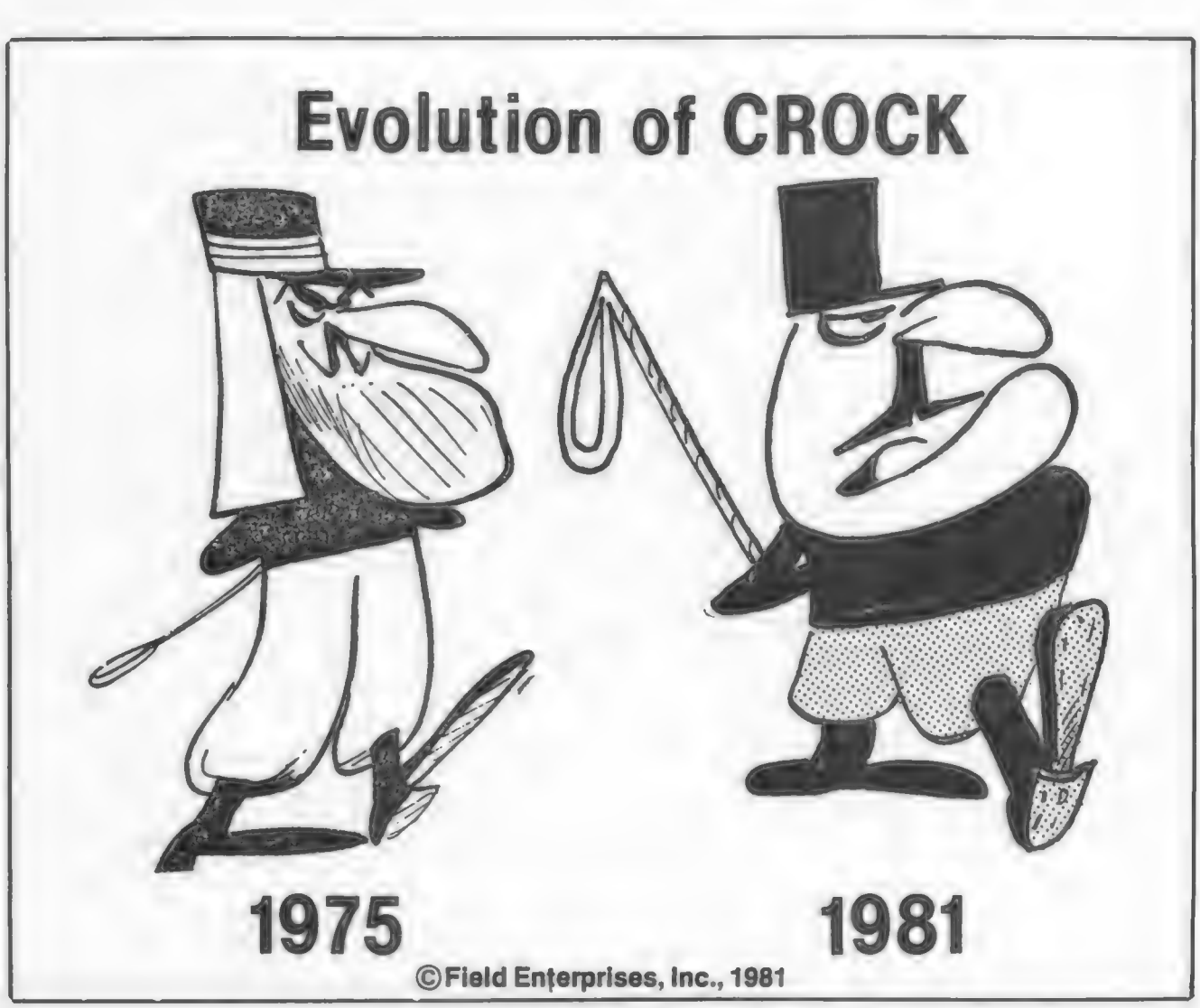
Let your gags cool off for a couple of days, then reread them. You'll be surprised how you can change a few words and improve them 100 percent. Don't be discouraged with the length of time it takes to do a gag. Sometimes I write a Sunday page in thirty minutes and other times I spend hours doing a daily. Remember, don't hang onto a gag if it doesn't work....discard it and go on. You'll usually top it later with something different and better.

There's nothing more creative or satisfying than being involved in the comic strip industry. It has the greatest people in the world, people who have time to help you as a young cartoonist and even syndicated cartoonists who help fellow cartoonists who are in competition with them. As I often say, "For a bunch of guys on the juice, we aren't bad"!

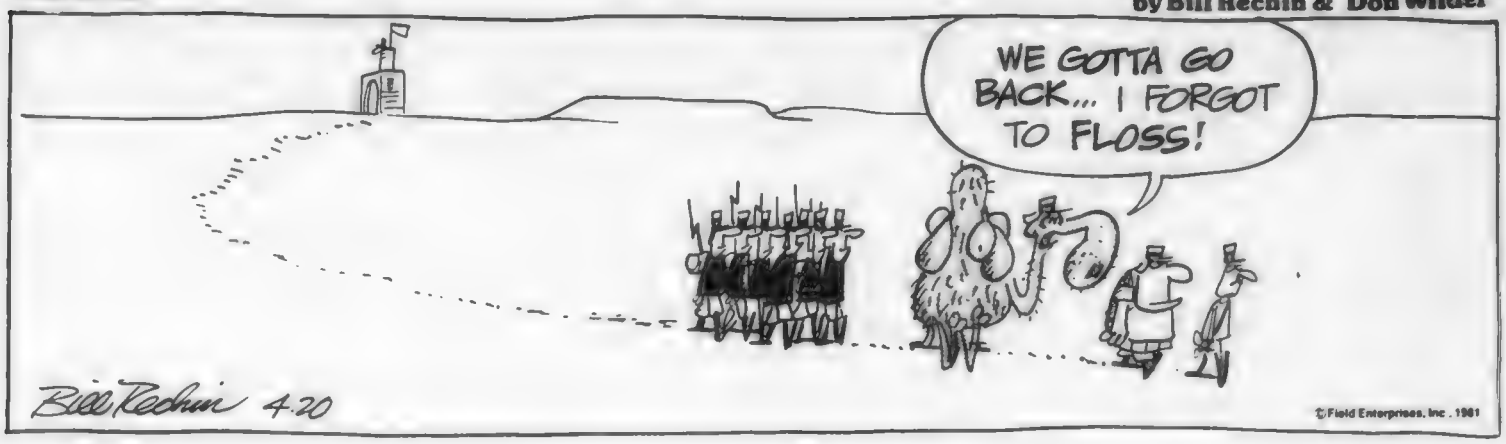
Bill Rechin says:

As Don mentioned earlier, I joined the CROCK strip in late 1975, at which time I was the Art Director and Vice President of one of the larger art studios and exhibit houses in the Washington, D.C. area. My background is typical of anyone who ends up drawing noses for a living. I was born in Buffalo, N.Y. where I learned to draw snow (sand and snow are the same color in Buffalo). I went to the Albright Art School there and graduated in time to be invited into our army for two years during the Korean mess. My time in the military introduced me to marching, peeling, painting, running, shooting, jumping, falling, exercising, C-rations, barracks, flies, latrines, trenches, sandbags, grenades, cannons, tanks, mortars and all those wonderful things that are so helpful now that I am drawing a comic strip about them.

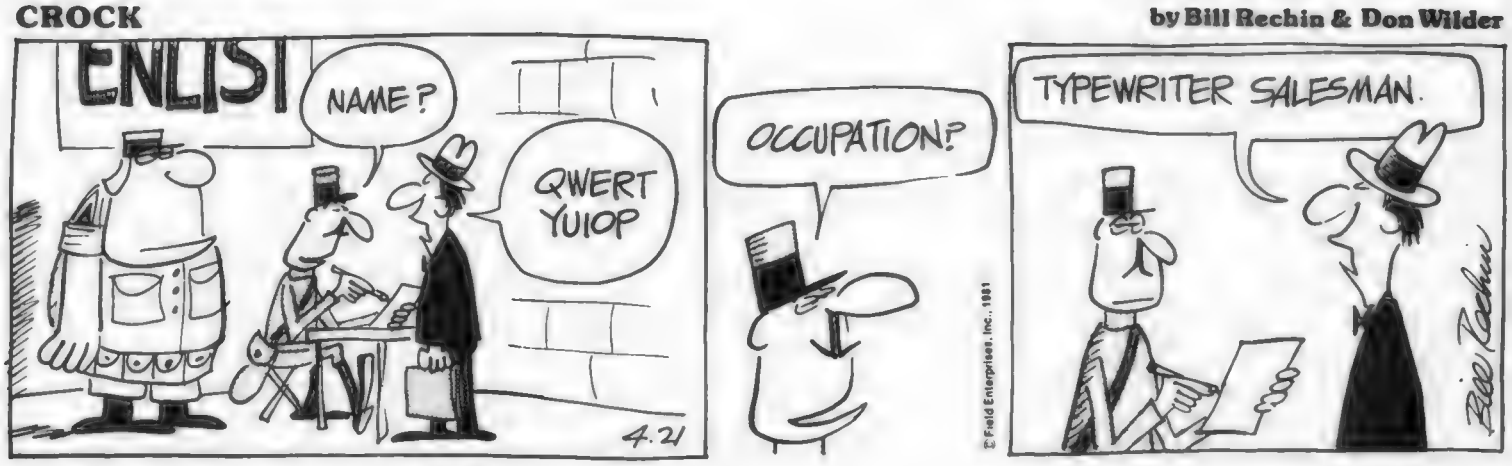
After the army, and remembering the yellow snow in Buffalo, I migrated to the D.C. area and settled in Northern Virginia, became a boy art director and waited for Don Wilder to show up. To kill time, about twenty years, I did a lot of stuff using comic characters to sell everything from army land mines to coffee substitutes and created characters for national campaigns ranging from JOHNNY HORIZAN for the Department of Interior to a pack of ski bums to market HEAD SKI clothes and equipment. It was during this period I met Brant Parker who was just startingTHE WIZARD OF ID and phasing out as Art Director with the Federal Systems Group at IBM. Brant taught me the importance of getting inside comic characters and becoming the extension of them at the right end of the pen. For a while I crawled into a funny eagle named PLURIBUS and flew around the comic pages for about two years. Finally, I climbed out of that and into a fort in the desert with CROCK.



CROCK by Bill Rechin & Don Wilder



CROCK by Bill Rechin & Don Wilder



Ads for The Phone Company, using the 'Crock' characters.

I JUST CALLED MOMMIE LONG-DISTANCE.
YOU MUST BE THRILLED.
WHAT WERE HER FIRST WORDS?
"WHY DIDN'T YOU CALL AFTER 5 P.M. TO SAVE MONEY, SCHNOOK?"

Whenever it's possible, the smart long-distance caller saves money by placing calls during the evening or weekend.

From Sunday through Friday between 5 p.m. and 11 p.m., there's a 35% discount on direct-dialed calls. From 11 p.m. to 8 a.m., it's 60%. And you can save 60% all day Saturday and on Sunday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. You have to agree, Mother knows best.

WHADD'YA GOT SPICY TO READ?
BOOK MOBILE
I FOUND THIS ONE VERY EXCITING.
HOW TO SAVE TIME AND MONEY DIALING DIRECT
CAN I HELP IT IF I LEAD A SHELTERED LIFE?

You'll be delighted to read the facts about long-distance direct dialing. Because they're all about saving money.

So instead of dialing the operator, dial direct and put the savings in your pocket. Phone during evening hours or weekends and it costs even less. You could even save enough to buy a good book.

CROCK by Bill Rechin & Don Wilder

SMILE, FIGOWITZ, AND THE WORLD SMILES BACK!
I ONCE TRIED TOSSING MY HEAD BACK IN LIGHTHEARTED LAUGHTER.
...IT WAS DUCK SEASON.
4:27

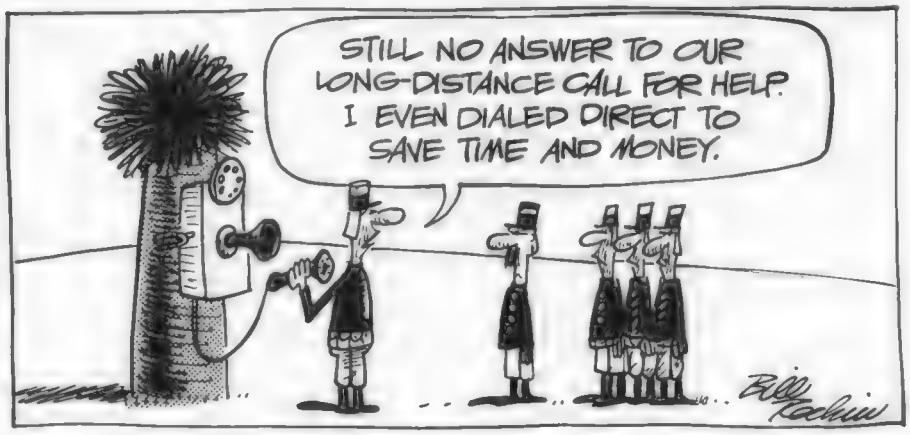
LOOK WHAT I BOUGHT FROM THE SERGEANT.
WHY DID YOU BUY A PHONE THAT DOESN'T COME WITH A FULL SERVICE PLAN?
BECAUSE IT WAS CHEAPER THAN THE BRIDGE HE WAS SELLING.
Bill Rechin

When you get your phones from us, you get a lot of extra value...reliable phone company service.

And when you need additional phones...want to modernize...or decide to expand your business communications system, depend on us. We'll be there with the latest in tested and proven equipment. Planned to meet your exact requirements.

Telephone company phones come with telephone company service. A good reason to call us when you're looking for the best communications value.

Phone the Phone Company.
000-0000



Our operators are there to help you. But if you don't need help, why pay for it?

In almost every case, dialing your long-distance call direct costs you less than operator-assisted calls. If you don't have the number, just dial the area code for the community you want, plus 555-1212. Give the operator the town, the person or company, and the address.

Then, jot down the number and dial your call direct. It's faster and it costs less.

As Don pointed out, development of the humor and characters for CROCK became a love-child for us. We talked every detail through and looking at the earlier drawings to what CROCK is now, it certainly has been an amazing evolution. Only an artist and cartoonist can feel the wonder of the creation of characters when they cease becoming just lines and begin to live. They become great friends as you draw them and they look up at you and you have a relationship between pen, ink, paper and those wonderful little people. You have to develop personalities and movement in these people. You have to know how each will react to different situations and....you have to draw them funny! Don has a great handle on this; his mind is constantly cross-referencing the characters with someone or some situation to fit the gag.... i.e. "Make Poulet like Peter Sellers when he...." or "Remember Wallace Beery in...." and it works! We get a lot of fan mail with reference to our characters as individuals, which means we've really communicated with our readers and they know our guys and their personalities.

Our methods of working are simple, Don writes, I draw. We meet about an hour a week somewhere, depending on where we are at the time. He's got a bundle of gags and I've got a bundle of strips from last week's gags. We take one final look and every so often see a word that could be better or an expression that could be more subtle and away they go to Field Newspaper Syndicate in Irvine, California where they are distributed to papers all over the U.S. and overseas.

We are both involved in spin-off activities and we probably see each other more on these types of things than on the strip. Our fifth CROCK paperback is coming out in the fall and we've just developed a line of T-shirts using the CROCK characters which will be sold nationally. We've gotten involved in the 1982 World's Fair in Knoxville, Tennessee and are developing characters for the city of Knoxville pavilion. This was especially gratifying for Don as Knoxville is his home town. We were even presented with the key to the city, but, unfortunately, it doesn't fit! As long as everything else does, though, I'll be drawing these grubby little characters and Don will be putting words in their mouths and, who knows....maybe we'll replace that great T.V. hit BOWLING FOR DOLLARS someday!

DAN DOWLING

Mary Lee Hester, the wife of cartoonist Don Hester, writes from Sherman, Texas to say that political cartoonist Dan Dowling is one of their all-time favorite cartoonists, and that they'd like to share their enthusiasm with our readers. Mary Lee further says that she and her husband have always clipped Dowling cartoons appearing in a variety of publications, and so we're able to show here a few of the samples from the impressive Hester file. She contacted Dowling at his retirement home in Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, and wrote this interesting piece based on the personal information Dowling gave her.

DAN B. DOWLING

By

Mary Lee Hester

Dan Dowling surrounded by two of his enthusiasms — love of animals and of jazz music.

Grabbing for a politician's jugular vein was too vicious. Ridiculing a politician's physical abnormalities was too easy and besides, it missed the point. But ridiculing a man's ideas — now there was the *real* target. Dowling cloaked them in a chuckle that tainted the subject as being foolish or outrageous. Such tactics could leave a lasting impression on an audience — a return to just plain, old-fashioned "horse" sense.

If laughter is the most common emotion stirring in the breast of man, then Dan B. Dowling, one of the nation's foremost political cartoonists, has done a lot of stirring during his professional lifetime.

The great Herblock used a decided heavy-handedness to keep an ominous image of Stalin stalking the free world, which left people quaking in their boots, anesthetized into a comatose state.

It took Dowling's pawky sense of humor and his shorthand style of execution, to poke fun at this monster's ideas, exposing them to the world as folly. Adding jest to the face of fear can short-circuit its power. By painting Stalin as a dangerous buffoon, Dowling splashed cold-water on those who were mesmerized by the tyrant. For those who feared, he provided them with courage by pointing to Stalin's vulnerabilities.

Dowling served his apprenticeship through a series of schools and jobs — some totally unrelated to his ultimate goal of cartooning.

He said, "Like a lot of political cartoonists, I just sprung from the soil of the midwest."

Specifically, his birthplace was O'Neil, Nebraska, where he made his arrival in 1906. However, his boyhood was spent in Iowa, where Ding, the great political cartoonist, was featured in the *Des Moines Register and Leader.*

Ding cast a spell over young Dowling. He said, "I had always wanted to be a cartoonist and was exposed to Ding's cartoons as a boy. I was lucky to follow such a capable man on a daily basis."

After high school, the youngster headed for the West Coast, where he enrolled in college at the University of Berkeley. He was there from 1924-1928.

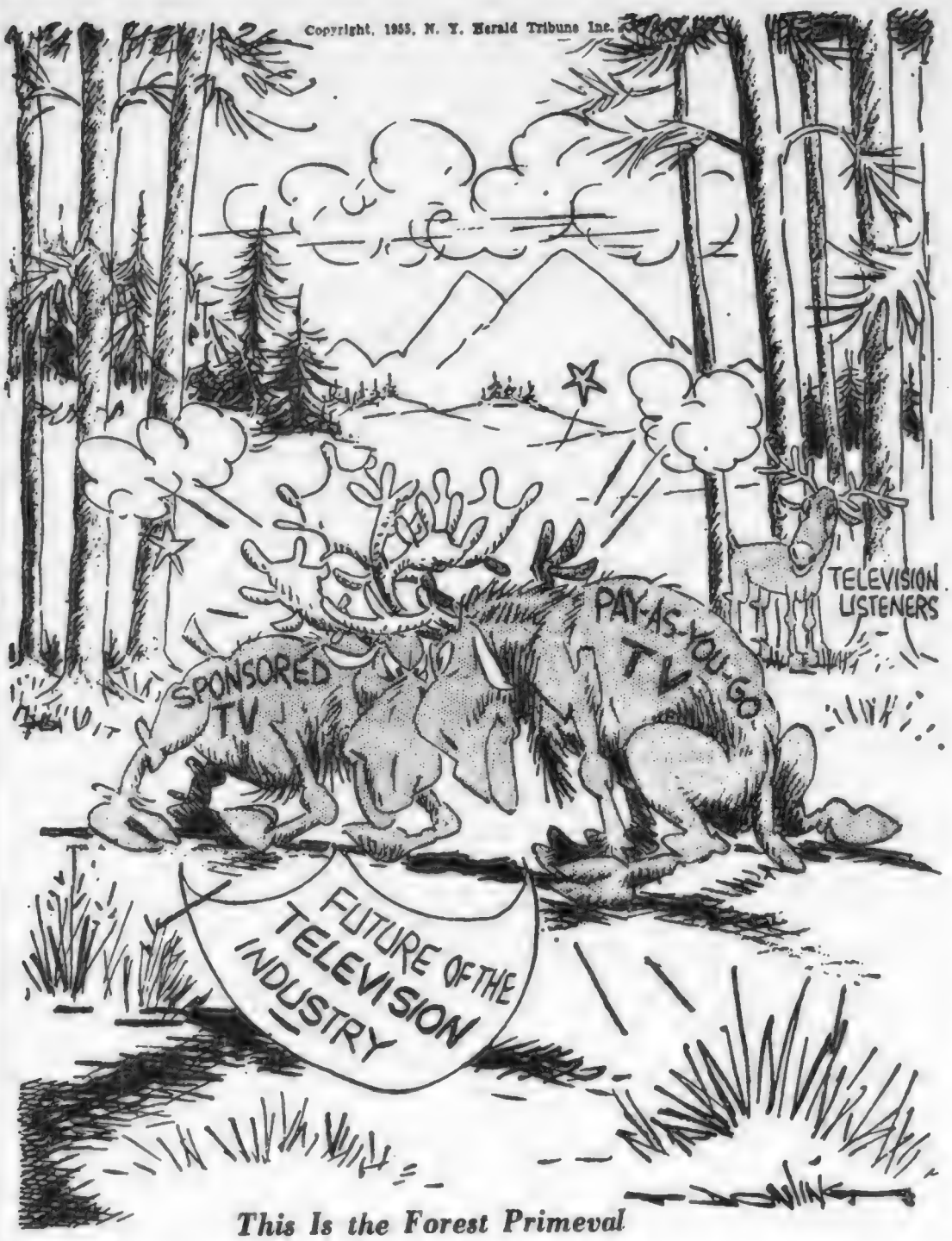
In his usual "telegraph" style, he admitted, "I didn't learn much, but had a lot of fun there."

He mentioned that, "Three years ago, Berkeley held a 'Class of '28' reunion (spanning 50 years). But, I'll be darned if I'd go to that!"

After college, he experienced a strong desire to travel around the world. However, that desire brought about a financial question as to how he could manage such a trip.

Putting ingenuity to work, he found himself employed by a dance band as its drummer. The band was making ready for a tour which included all those wonderful, far-away places Dowling yearned to see. So, he drummed his way around the world, which added a richness to his "Plainsmen's" upbringing.

Upon returning to the States in 1931, he settled down at the Academy of Fine Arts, in Chicago, to resume his study of art. However serious that intention, he said his attendance was short-lived. He decided, instead, to get into the newspaper business in Chicago, where he had the opportunity to become a police reporter.



This Is the Forest Primeval

"It was during the prohibition era which featured such notorious characters as Al Capone and Bugs Moran. It was an experience that turned into a lot of fun for me."

He said, "I recall how the reporters would be summoned from the press room to stand in a police line-up for witnesses to see them along with the real suspects.

"Twice, witnesses pointed to me! 'Is that the one?', a detective would ask. 'Oh, absolutely!', came the reply from the witnesses."

While working in Chicago, he began drawing cartoons. That practice and experience enabled him to join the Associated Press in New York, as a retouch artist, a little later on.

He bided his time until one of his sources tipped him off that the *Omaha World Herald* would soon need an editorial cartoonist.

Despite the fact that he had no actual, on-the-job cartooning experience, he put in a bid for the job and got it. Thus, he retraced his steps from New York back to the midwest.

He remained with the *Omaha World Herald* from 1937 until the start of World War II, at which time he went into the infantry.

During his four years as a Captain in the U.S. Infantry, Dowling, in effect, served on two war fronts, simultaneously. He squeezed out enough time from military duties to continue applying his talent as a cartoonist. These he submitted, regularly, to the *Omaha World Herald,* as well as to the *New York Herald Tribune.*

When he mustered out of service, he went to work on the premises of the *New*

Mary Lee Hester, native of Alabama, is a freelance writer and radio operator-broadcaster. Mother of three daughters, she also found the time for employment with the Federal Government and for a time with private industry. It was after the children had left the nest that Mary Lee went back to college for the purpose of obtaining her radio license and broadcast endorsement. Her jazz programs have been heard on KDSX Sherman, and KERA-FM, Dallas, Texas. Her 8-hour jazz "blockbusters" featuring swing musicians received more response from the public than any other program aired over KERA-FM. Mrs. Hester publishes a political newsletter which has wide distribution through the news media. She also writes a popular regular feature on Texas jazz giants for the Texas Jazz Monthly. She has contributed feature stories to the Sherman Democrat of Sherman, Texas. She wrote a feature article for the Midland Magazine of the Omaha World Herald, and she has written for both the Mexico City News and the Manchester Union Leader, Manchester, New Hampshire.

"Run Under Me Again!"

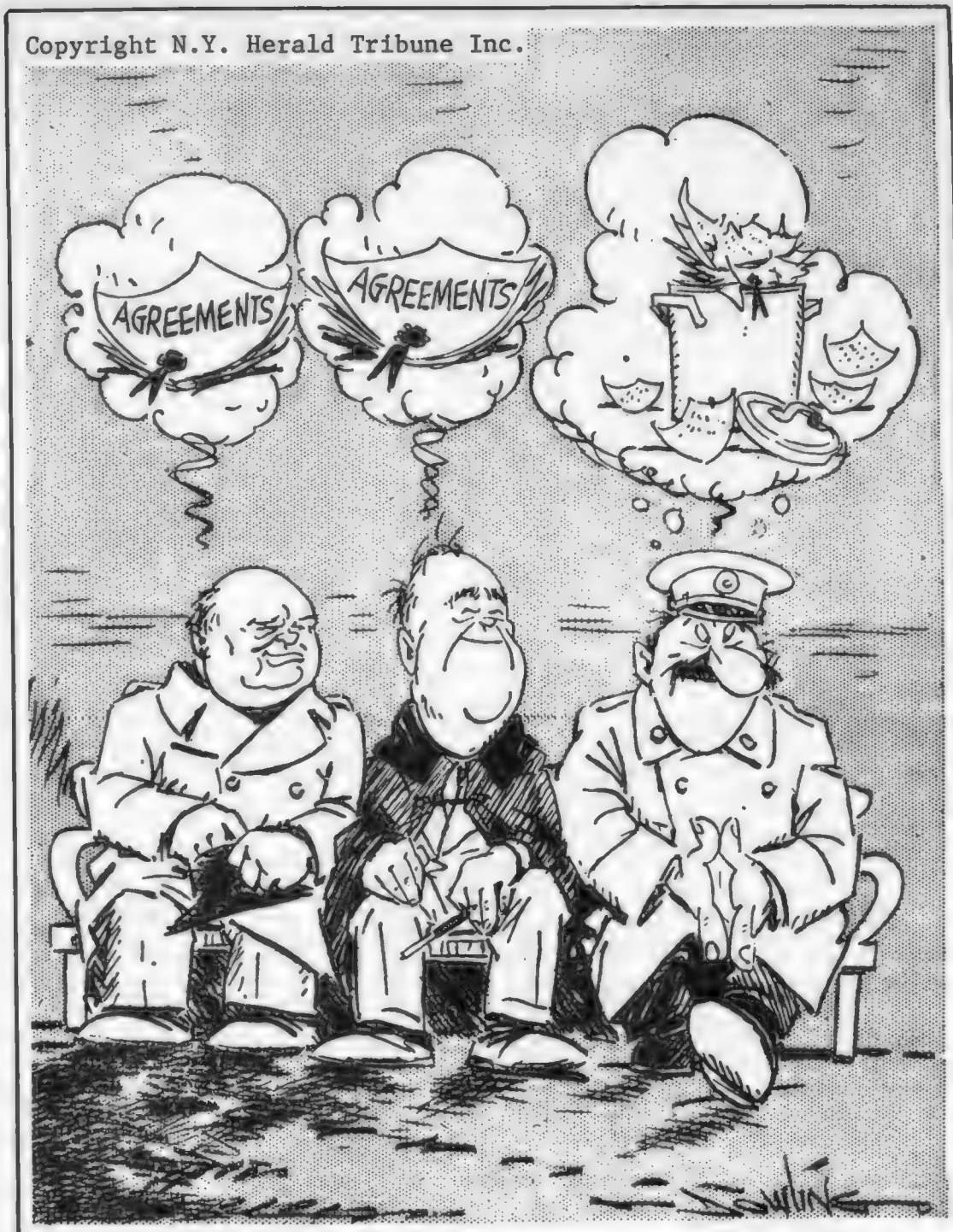
© 1956, New York Herald Tribune Inc.

Did You Get the Fire Out, Chief?

© 1963, New York Herald Tribune Inc.

Progress Report From Russia

© 1964, New York Herald Tribune Inc.



The Big Three Picture at Yalta Finds a Place in the Archives

York Herald Tribune, where he became syndicated in 1949. He remained with the *Trib* until it folded, along with other New York papers, 25 years later.

A modest man, Dan Dowling might not agree with the view of many, that the *Herald Tribune* represented the chief competitor of the *New York Times.* Primarily, this was due to such *Tribune* features as Dowling's super cartoons, Walter Lippman's running news commentary, and Red Smith's unsurpassed sports columns.

Apparently, the *Times* has never yet, felt any necessity to utilize the work of a cartoonist, or to bother with comic strips. Because of the Dowling, Lippman and Smith contributions, the *Trib* was able to give the *Times* a "run for the money."

When the *New York Herald Tribune* had to close its doors, Dowling backtracked to the midwest, again. This time, he went to work for another of the nation's greatest newspapers, the *Kansas City Star.* He remained with the *Star* for six years preceding his decision to retire.

He put the stopper back on his ink bottle and shoved off for one of America's miniature Eden's — Carmel-by-the-Sea, California. He has but one complaint. "Retirement is all right except you don't have any leisure. I spend most of my time exercising my Great Dane dog. I like very fine dogs and go in for the show type."

Although Dowling "forgot" to mention it, during the interview, "Who's Who in America" provided some vitally interesting information on the great cartoonist.

He was recipient of the Christopher Medal in 1956. During the same year, he won the Freedoms Foundation Award. He is a member of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists, of which he served as president from 1956-1958. He also is a Member of the Beta Theta Pi. (It is my contention that had he not been a political conservative, he might have won a Pulitzer Prize for his superb contributions.)

He has a son and a daughter, who now, of course, are grown up. Both live in New York, and "neither turned out to be cartoonists," he said.

When asked about his cartooning technique, Dowling replied that it was "old-fashioned," i.e., ink, brush and crayon.

His brush was a Series 9-Fine Point Red Sable made by the Art Sign Company, which he simply dipped in India ink.

He used a rough kind of paper which took a crayon sufficiently for the engraver to pick it up. It is known by the trade name, "Glarco" board.

He relied on the Beral crayon and the Eagle thick lead Prismacolor Black 935 pencils.

He chose durable erasers that could take a lot of wear. He said, "Sometimes my eraser would actually get hot because I used it so much."

He said he could draw a cartoon in one and one-half hours if things were going well. But ideas are what took all the time. If one merely wanted to illustrate the news, then you could think of one per minute. However, the more difficult way is to hunt for just the right situation to tell the story. It can take many hours.

"Ideas didn't just come in through the window. Sometimes the idea will pop into mind while one is reading, if the imagination is working well."

Most of the time, though, he said he resorted to "thumbing through stacks of pictures. Pictures of everything where action was involved. Pictures would show waterfalls, furnaces, attics, boats, everything."

He gave the following example of a cartoon he did about Adlai Stevenson, during the Presidential campaign, which Stevenson liked very much.

"He had been carping on the possible

economic disaster if Eisenhower were to be elected. Times were really very good. I wanted to tell this in a cartoon.

"I came across a picture showing people dancing on a ship's deck, and it sort of rung a bell. So, we put Stevenson in a life boat ready to be lowered, with his luggage, tooth-brush and all. We had him saying, 'Aren't you terribly worried?'"

Dan Dowling is quite a philosopher, feeling that cartoonists are, in a way, 'born'. That is to say, they have imagination, a sense of the dramatic (along with a bit of luck) and some ability to draw.

"Of the latter, improvement comes with practice. Select the styles you like and borrow from them. Everyone else did. If you want absolute originality, then you have to go back to the caves. Drawing styles develop in the artist over a period of time. It finds its own identity just as one's handwriting does."

He feels that the best way for a cartoonist to get started, is to choose an area where one would like to live, "then inquire about the age of the newspaper's incumbent cartoonist. Get on the paper you've selected in any capacity that you can."

He thinks it's easier to work from the inside. "There's one thing about cartoonists; it takes the editor only a few seconds to judge the product."

Dowling feels that one of the troubles today, is the fact that there just aren't many newspapers. "Usually, there is little divergence in policy, except in election years. Just read the columnists for various views and other editorials, and you will find that the thinking is pretty much alike."

He said that he always attended a daily editorial conference and listened in.

"It helped me to focus on the news. I was never told what to draw. I made a pencil sketch and presented it to the chief editorial writer. He corrected the spelling. If the cartoon wasn't clear, he said so."

Where is his original collection of those amazing, timely, wonderful cartoons, which caused chuckles to be heard around the nation?

"I have no originals left. Gave all of them away, except for some which burned during a fire."

As ardent admirers of the unforgettable Dan B. Dowling, my husband and I have a folder brimful of copies of his published cartoons. It is a file we have treasured over the years. In our view he is one of the greatest "idea men" ever to skewer a political boondoggle.

Reviewing this collection again in connection with writing about our hero cartoonist, we are utterly astonished to note how fresh, topical and applicable are these cartoons to today's international political scene. His foresight was amazing as he peered down the long, long corridor of time. In effect, "he saw the future and it *did not* work!"

An example cartoon concerned the issue of Soviet satellites, drawn 25 years ago, which would serve a perfect illustration of what's going on between Poland and the USSR, momentarily.

The scenario is the same. Only the names would need to be changed. That 25-year-old cartoon depicted the Hungarian Revolution as Hungary attempted to break free of Soviet domination. The Communist leader then was Malenkov. Today, the name is Brezhnev, and of course the country is freedom-loving Poland.

Dowling proved over and over again, the old adage that "a picture is worth a thousand words," and we have the evidence in our file of his cartoon clippings which we wisely collected during his professional years. ●

Teamwork

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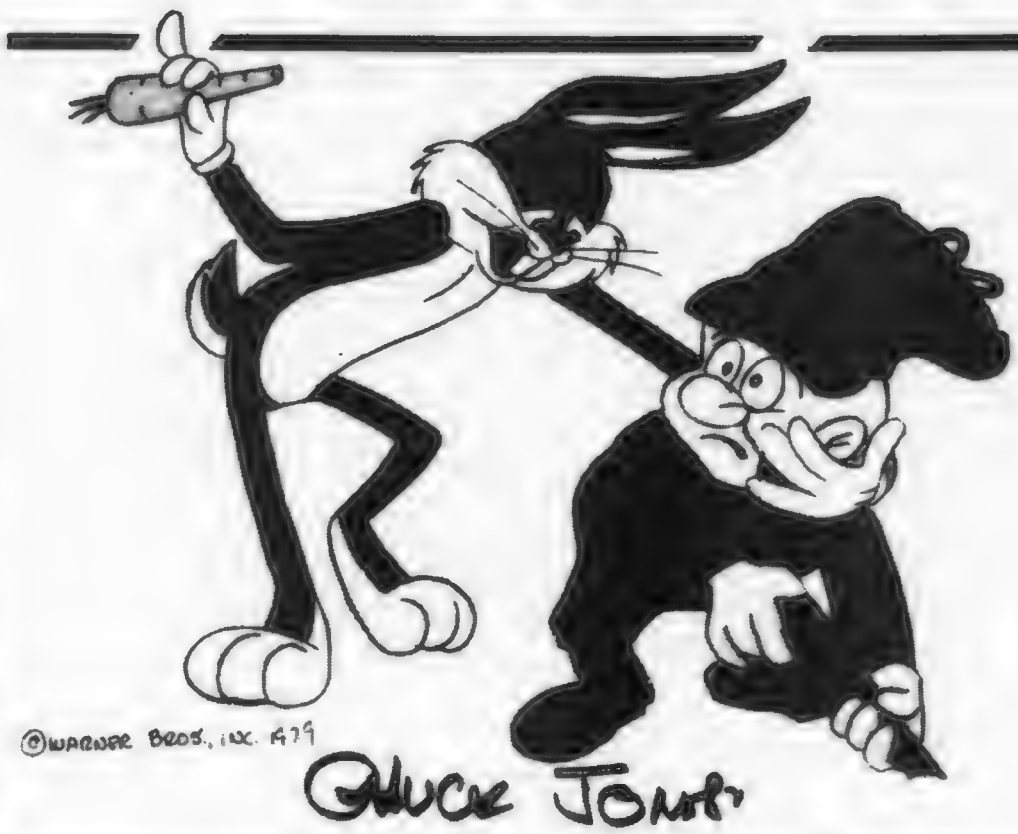

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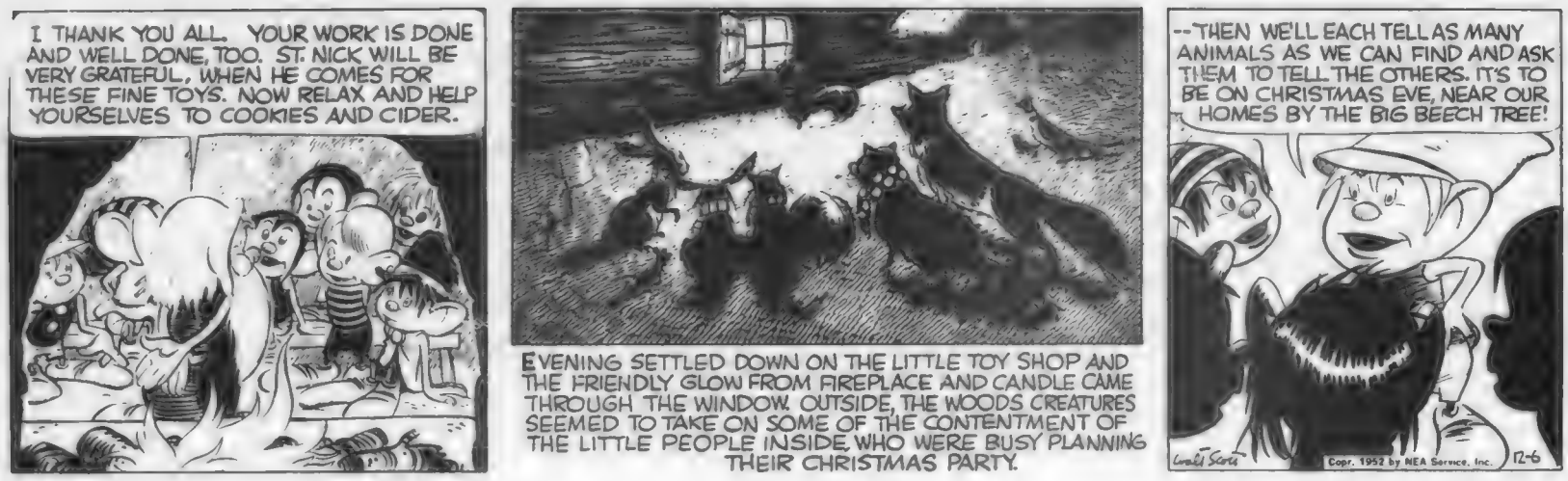

I THANK YOU ALL. YOUR WORK IS DONE AND WELL DONE, TOO. ST. NICK WILL BE VERY GRATEFUL, WHEN HE COMES FOR THESE FINE TOYS. NOW RELAX AND HELP YOURSELVES TO COOKIES AND CIDER.
EVENING SETTLED DOWN ON THE LITTLE TOY SHOP AND THE FRIENDLY GLOW FROM FIREPLACE AND CANDLE CAME THROUGH THE WINDOW. OUTSIDE, THE WOODS CREATURES SEEMED TO TAKE ON SOME OF THE CONTENTMENT OF THE LITTLE PEOPLE INSIDE, WHO WERE BUSY PLANNING THEIR CHRISTMAS PARTY.
--THEN WE'LL EACH TELL AS MANY ANIMALS AS WE CAN FIND AND ASK THEM TO TELL THE OTHERS. IT'S TO BE ON CHRISTMAS EVE, NEAR OUR HOMES BY THE BIG BEECH TREE!
Walt Scott
Copr. 1952 by NEA Service, Inc.
12-6

The Little People Christmas by Walt Scott 1952

A Christmas Strip

LOOKING BACK ON NEA'S CHRISTMAS STRIP

Each year the NEA Christmas strip brings holiday greetings from Newspaper Enterprise Association to the editors and readers of NEA client newspapers. The strip began many years ago and continued as part of the NEA service after NEA merged management and operations with United Feature syndicate in 1978, and both became affiliates of United Media Enterprises.

Described by one Christmas strip artist as a "labor of love," the special NEA strip has usually been written and drawn by NEA staff on their own time. From the drawing board, it passes through the hands of editors, management and sales people before reaching the client editors.

Cartoonists on the Christmas strip were often known for their work on other strips. A current notable is John Lane, who drew several Christmas strips and now draws the popular BEN SWIFT for UFS. Walt Scott, who was the dean of the NEA Christmas strip for a decade from the early 50s to early 60 was also the creator of NEA's THE LITTLE PEOPLE which sometimes figured in the Christmas strip. OUT OUR WAY artist Paul Gringle drew "How Wyn Sock Saved Christmas" in 1969. Jack Kent was famous for the creation of King Aroo and drew "Why Christmas Almost Wasn't" in 1968. Mark Lasky, the creator of Montague

MYRIADS OF TINY STARS BEGAN TO FALL OUT OF THE BLACK WINTER SKY...
Walt Scott
The Spirit! HE'S GONE!
Must be on my way folks! I've got to be all over the world tonight! Be seein you
Copr. 1953 by NEA Service, Inc.
12-23

The Little Tree That Talked by Walt Scott 1953

MY, MY! JUST LOOK AT THAT TABLE!
YOU CAN HARDLY SEE THE TREE FOR TRIMMINGS!
LET'S EAT BEFORE EVERYTHING'S COLD!
YOU CHILDREN WILL JUST HAVE TO WAIT WITH THE GIFTS TILL AFTER YOU'VE EATEN!
© 1956 by NEA Service, Inc.
SEEMS LIKE NOW WOULD BE A GOOD TIME TO THANK HIM FOR ALL OUR BLESSINGS!
Walt Scott
12-21

The Animal Christmas by Walt Scott 1956

the Mouse, star of the 1980 and 1981 Christmas strips, also draws the syndicated panel ANTENNAS.

Although outside artists are a rarity in the history of the NEA Christmas strip, Wally Wood, who was then drawing for *Mad Magazine,* was one famous cartoonist who contributed his talents. In 1967 he created a strip called "Bucky's Christmas Caper."

CARTOONIST PROFILES went to the source of the NEA Christmas strip — past and present — to ask cartoonists, writers and comic editors their fondest reminiscences about the annual creation of this strip.

Among those interviewed were Bobby Miller, current managing editor of comics at UFS/NEA; Tom Peoples, former vice president and director of comic art at NEA; "Flash" Fairfield, another former NEA comic art director; Mark Lasky, creator of the 1980 and 1981 Christmas strips; John Lane, creator of several past Christmas strips and the UFS comic strip BEN SWIFT; Phil Pastoret, former comics story editor at NEA and writer on past Christmas strips; Ernest L. "East" Lynn, dean of NEA comic art from 1924 to 1964.

WHY AN NEA CHRISTMAS STRIP?

PEOPLES: The people who worked on the Christmas strip enjoyed what they were doing for the holiday season. They wanted to give client newspapers something to make them feel good about the Christmas season. I think we succeeded.

MILLER: It's a gift to NEA service users. The strip is intended for children — charming narratives to read every day in December.

PASTORET: More than anything the Christmas strip is an expression of NEA for the holidays — a Merry Christmas to its clients.

MANY HOURS LATER...
OKAY, CONSCIENCE, YOU WIN!
THEN WHILE YOU'RE IN THE MOOD, GO TELL 'EM!
© 1957 by NEA Service, Inc.
AHEM! AHEM!
IT'S OLD RATTE!
CAN'T BE! PACKARD RATTE HOLLERS MEAN-LIKE!
I HAD THAT COMING! I--ER--I SORTA WISH YOU'D TRY NOT TO HATE ME TOO MUCH--GUESS BEING FRIENDS IS OUT--WHAT I MEAN IS--I--AH, OH, SHUCKS! I'D LIKE YOU TO COME IN AND HELP YOURSELVES TO THE GRUB! AND TAKE YOUR STUFF, TOO! PLEASE?
MAN!
12-29

The Music Box Trio by Walt Scott 1957

NOW HURRY, YOU ELVES, THERE IS NO TIME TO LAG!
TAKE ALL OF THE GIFTS AT THE TOP OF THE BAG.
AND PLACE THEM AROUND IN THE BUSHES AND TREES
WHERE THESE SPECIAL CHILDREN CAN FIND THEM WITH EASE!
NORTH WALL
THE BEST TOYS OF ALL,
YES THE BEST TOYS OF ALL!
FOR GOOD GIRLS AND BOYS,
WHO LIVE INSIDE THE WALL!
S.CLAUS
ACT 1 SCENE 2
1966 by NEA, Inc
12-6

A Christmas Playhouse by John Lane 1966

HOW IS THE CHRISTMAS STRIP CREATED EACH YEAR?

PEOPLES: Most of the time we look to NEA staff for fresh, new storylines. Rarely did we go outside, but we usually had several good ideas on hand from year to year.

PASTORET: It's frequently a collaboration between artist and writer, a matter of getting an idea and putting it together.

FAIRFIELD: We usually used a script from a writer and gave it to an artist. Of course, Wally Scott did his own, but a typical example is when Phil Pastoret wrote "The Toys That Talked: A Christmas Fantasy" (1971) and John Lane drew it.

ON COLLABORATION:

PASTORET: I was lucky to collaborate with John Lane. Nobody does it better, he has this tremendous visual acuity that helps a writer see how the storyline will work visually.

MILLER: Very good things can grow

BUCKY'S CHRISTMAS CAPER
By Wally Wood
WHAT IS OUR POSITION NOW, NAVIGATOR?
ACCORDING TO THESE INSTRUMENTS AND MY CALCULATIONS, WE ARE NOW FLYING OVER OMAHA, NEBRASKA AT AN ALTITUDE OF 25 FEET!
1967 by NEA, Inc
I HATE TO MAKE SNAP JUDGMENTS, BUT OFFHAND, I'D SAY WE'RE LOST!
BUCKY! THE ENGINES HAVE QUIT! WHAT'S WRONG?
wood
THIS MEANS THAT WE'RE EITHER THE VICTIMS OF SABOTAGE OR SORCERY!
...OR THAT WE'VE RUN OUT OF GAS!
12-6

Bucky's Christmas Caper by Wally Wood 1967

WHY CHRISTMAS ALMOST WASN'T
By Jack Kent
YOU KNOW WHY MY SLEIGH WON'T MOVE?!
TELL US!
PLEASE, MISS ENEMY SPY, MA'AM!
WELL, YOU FOLKS HAD CHRISTMAS AND WE WOOFERS DIDN'T GET ANY AND OUR KING WAS JEALOUS..
COOKIES
THIS END UP
SO HE'S TAKING REVENGE WITH A MAGNET!
JACK KENT
12-19 © 1968 by NEA, Inc.
¡NOW HOLD THIS STILL

Why Christmas Almost Wasn't by Jack Kent 1968

out of collaboration. In 1979, John Lane and I worked together on HOW TO MAKE A MERRY CHRISTMAS. This was the first appearance of Petey, and the comic art style that John developed for BEN SWIFT. Now as Ben Swift's grandson, Petey is seen daily and Sunday in the UFS comic.

LANE: A writer thinks in words and describes what he or she wants in a strip. The artist has to eliminate words and draw them instead. If the writer and the artist don't have rapport, it's almost impossible. Each has to have respect for the other's role.

ON CREATION:

LANE: It's a labor of love. Frequently NEA artists used their own time to work on the strip.

LASKY: Doing the NEA Christmas strip is a real challenge because not only is it a continuous story with a set number of strips, but each strip has to have a gag that stands on its own. Another funny aspect is the timing. Both years I did the Christmas strip, the bulk of my work was in July and August. So when others were off to the beach, I spent hot summer days at the drawing board.

ON RE-PUBLICATION

MILLER: My first year as comic art director in 1978, we used a strip by Jack Kent which had been published

HOW WYN SOCK SAVED CHRISTMAS By Paul Gringle
BYE, DONNER
SO LONG, PAL
© 1969 by NEA, Inc.
NICE TO SEE ONE OF THE GUYS FROM FLYING SCHOOL.... WONDER WHAT BECAME OF THAT NEIL ARMSTRONG FELLOW?
PAUL GRINGLE
LATER.
NORTH POLE
12-4
DONNER, AT LAST!! WHAT HAPPENED?
MY ANTLERS ICED UP AND I COULD'NT FIND THE POLE!

How Wyn Sock Saved Christmas by Paul Gringle 1969

HOW TO MAKE A MERRY CHRISTMAS
by Lane and Miller
PETEY, I DON'T HAVE MUCH ALLOWANCE SAVED FOR CHRISTMAS PRESENTS THIS YEAR.
ME NEITHER, PATTY. WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO?
WE COULD MAKE SOME.
...OR DRAW SOME.
© 1979 by NEA, Inc
LOOK AT THE ELF I JUST MADE.
THAT'S NEAT.
ELF
BIG DEAL!
ELF
12-3

How To Make a Merry Christmas by John Lane and Bobby Miller 1979

MONTAGUE'S CHRISTMAS by Lasky
HELLO, THERE, SWEETHEART!
YOU'RE SO ADORABLE, MONTAGUE.. MAKING A FUNNY FACE IN THE CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT LIKE THAT!
12-10
© 1980 by NEA, Inc.
THAT WASN'T A FUNNY FACE...
THAT WAS MY BURT REYNOLDS IMPERSONATION!
LASKY

Montague's Christmas by Mark Lasky 1980

...and now, Christmas 1981!

© 1981 by NEA, Inc.

"MONTAGUE'S RETURN!"

MONTAGUE'S RETURN by Lasky
HERE I AM IN THE NORTH POLE - MONTAGUE THE MOUSE... SANTA'S HONORARY ELF AND OFFICIAL FRECKLE-PAINTER!
12-7
I'VE PAINTED THOUSANDS OF FRECKLES ON CHRISTMAS DOLLS...
WHOOPS!
© 1981 by NEA, Inc.
NOT TO MENTION A FEW ON MYSELF...
LASKY
MONTAGUE'S RETURN by Lasky
THIS DOLL REMINDS ME OF MICHELLE, THE GIRL WHO TOOK ME IN LAST CHRISTMAS!
12-8
SHE HAS FRECKLES, TOO!
HMMM... I'M THE ONE WHO PAINTS FRECKLES ON SANTA'S DOLLS...
-BUT I WONDER WHO PAINTED THE FRECKLES ON MICHELLE?!
© 1981 by NEA, Inc.
LASKY

earlier — "Why Christmas Almost Wasn't." I can foresee re-publishing more of the old classics in the future. It might be good to collect them all in a book.

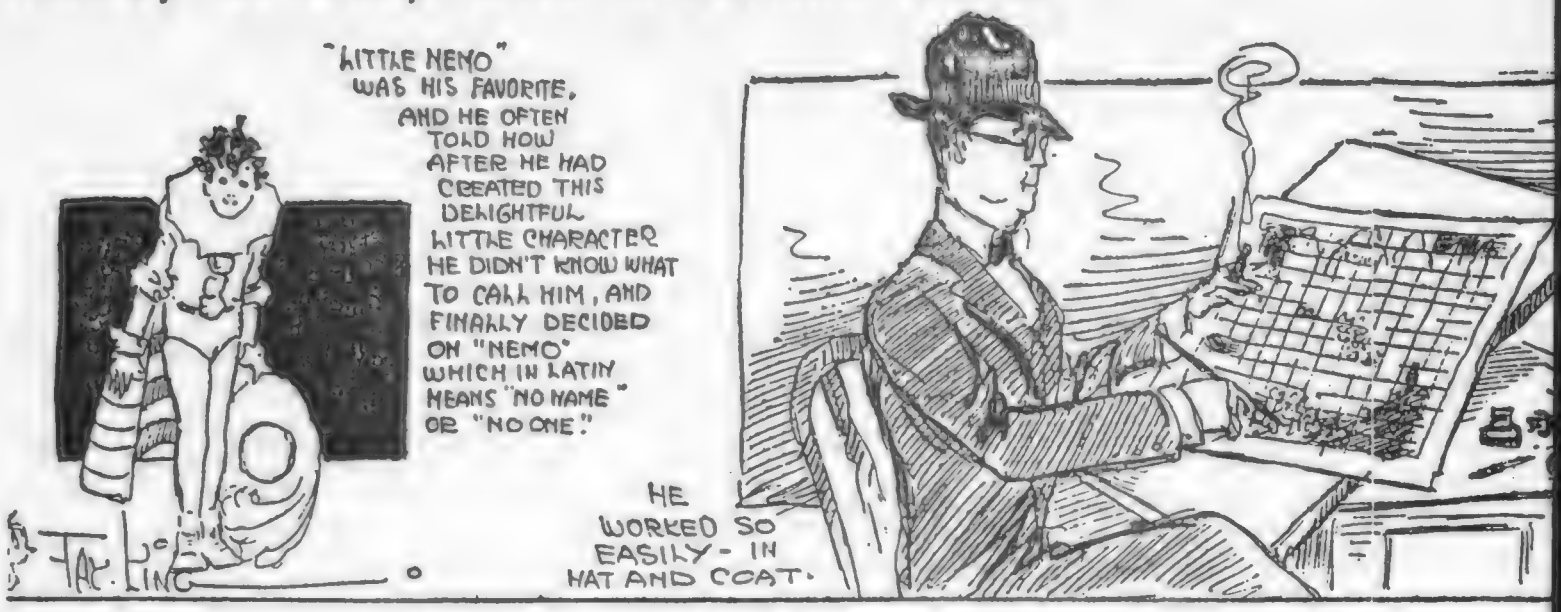
PASTORET: The kind of visual story-telling in the Christmas strip is ageless. It endures over the years. I'd like to see some of the old favorites used again.

FAIRFIELD: Walt Scott's "The Christmas Carol" (1954) was wonderful. It should be used again.

During the interviews it was obvious that the people involved with the strip over the years have fond sentiments for the tradition of the NEA Christmas strip and a hearty respect for the line-up of Christmas strip artists. "East" Lynn places the first Christmas strip before his time in 1924. It's a good bet the tradition will continue for many years to come. ●

Mark Lasky, the 27-year-old creator of "Montague's Return," is a veteran cartoonist. He has worked as an assistant to Mell Lazarus, creator of "Momma" and "Miss Peach." Lasky is also the creator of "Antennas," a popular syndicated panel, and his cartoons have appeared in many national magazines, including "National Review."

McCay as Deep Loss to Artistic World


"LITTLE NEMO" WAS HIS FAVORITE, AND HE OFTEN TOLD HOW AFTER HE HAD CREATED THIS DELIGHTFUL LITTLE CHARACTER HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO CALL HIM, AND FINALLY DECIDED ON "NEMO" WHICH IN LATIN MEANS "NO NAME" OR "NO ONE."
FAY KING
HE WORKED SO EASILY - IN HAT AND COAT.

Affectionate caricature of McCay drawn upon his death by Fay King, for the Hearst newspapers.

WINSOR McCAY RETROSPECTIVE OPENS IN JANUARY

The Museum has scheduled the long-awaited Winsor McCay one-man show for its Winter special exhibit. The opening date, not set at presstime, should be some time in early January and the show will continue for at least three months into early Spring. The artwork for this retrospective is being generously loaned by McCay's grandson Ray Winsor Moniz, who has been a long-time supporter of the Museum. Select pieces will also be loaned by other private collectors.

Included in the exhibit will be examples of virtually all of Winsor McCay's prolific creations. Original pen and ink drawings of his newspaper features, "Little Nemo in Slumberland," "Dreams of the Rarebit Fiend," "Little Sammy Sneeze," and "Hungry Henrietta" will be accompanied by color Sunday pages of the same titles. Also displayed will be some of McCay's masterful political cartoons, as well as drawings from his pioneering animated cartoons. Of particular interest to Museum visitors will be a continuous videotape showing of many of McCay's animated cartoons, including "Little Nemo," "Gertie the Dinosaur," "The Flying House," and "The Sinking of the Lusitania."

This tribute to one of the foremost pioneers of cartooning is long overdue. Although widely regarded among comic aficionados as a giant in his field, McCay's work is only recently gaining recognition by art critics and the general public. A master in all areas of cartoon art (newspaper strips, editorial cartoons, animated films and cartoon illustration), McCay was considered by his fellow cartoonists to be the best draftsman ever to work in pen and ink. The Winsor McCay Retrospective at the Museum of Cartoon Art should finally provide this enormously talented cartoonist with the reputation as one of the foremost figures of 20th century American art.

MUSEUM OF CARTOON ART

CASTLE

CASTLE HISTORY COMPLETED

As a part of the recently completed, federally funded renovation project, the Ward Castle Historic Structures Report was compiled by the Ehrenkrantz architectural firm. A technical analysis of the building's original structure, and of its present condition, the report is used as a reference point for future renovations. Bruce Popkin, an architecture student, spent months in the Museum photographing and measuring every minute detail. The Museum hopes in the near future to publish a brief history of the castle and the Ward family, compiled from the information in the Structures Report, which will be available to visitors for a small fee.

"THREE IDEAS A MINUTE!"

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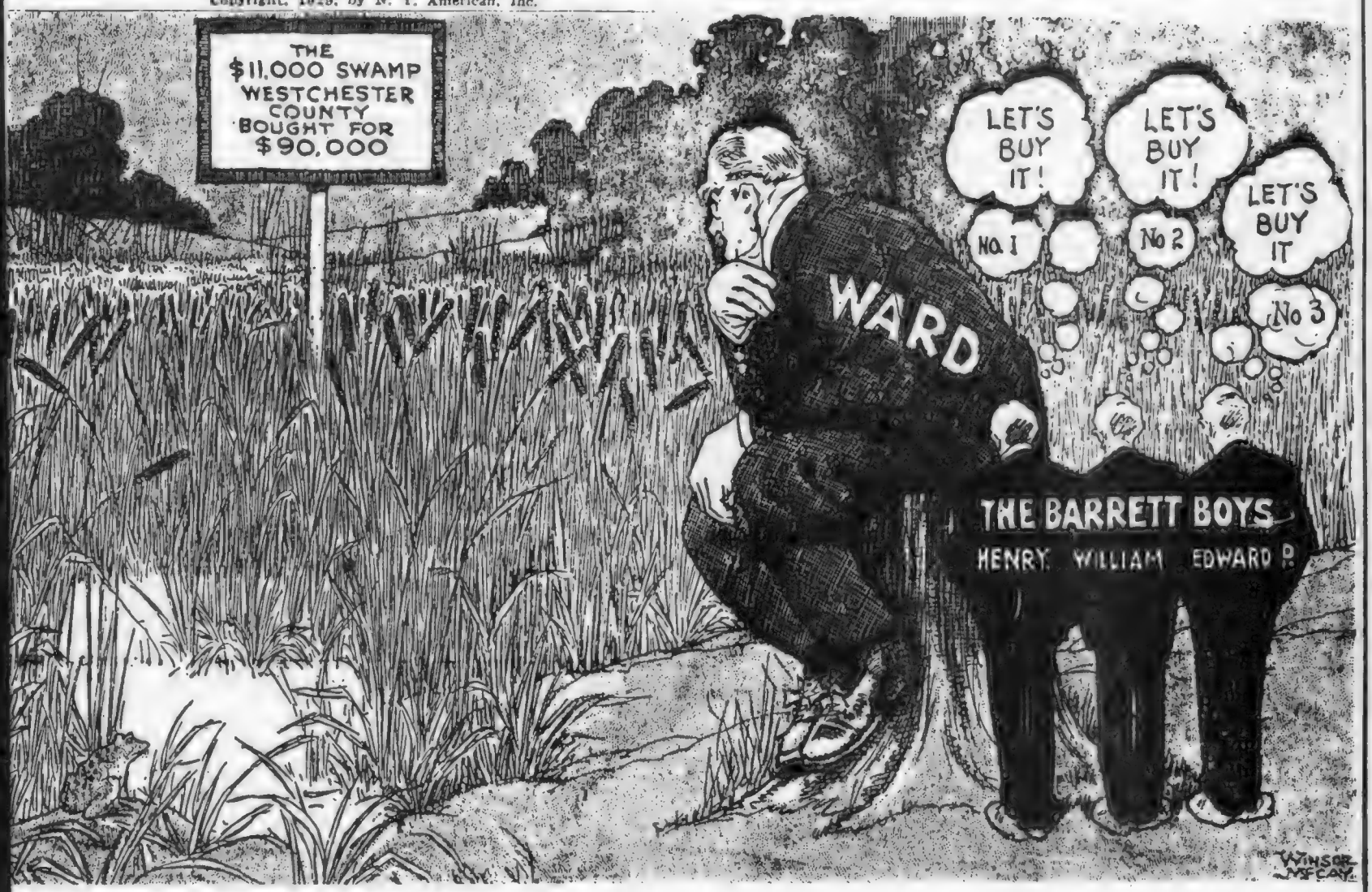


Political Cartoon by Winsor McCay of William L. Ward, Political Boss and former owner of the Museum Castle.

Spring Fever

GIT IT STEVE! GIT IT! GIT IT.
HEY! YOU!
SOAK IT, SKINNY
DON'T LET 'IM HIT IT
RUN! YOU SON UV A GUN!
HEY DE BALL'S LOST!
SWAT IT! WOTCHIE MAREYE
WINSOR McCAY

MUSEUM OF CARTOON ART

Dinner Dance!

MUSEUM HOLDS ANNUAL FUND RAISER

Incongruous vines and jungle plantings festooned the marble castle halls as the Museum held its annual dinner dance on Nov. 21. Tarzan's 50th birthday in the comics was the theme. Over 125 people attended and the goal of $10,000 was collected through tickets and contributions. This will help pay the yearly deficit in the Museum's operating costs.

A committee of volunteers worked since July on the party, arranging for music, food, decorations, liquor, invitations and all the details that go into such a party. Members of the committee were: Miss Ellen Armstrong, Mrs. Ann D. Brown, Mr. Frederick J. Coyer, Mr. Frank Coyle, Mrs. Stan Drake, Mr. Charles Green, Mrs. Frank Johnson, Mrs. Fred Mason, Mrs. John Cullen Murphy, Mrs. Lowell Robertson, Mrs. Leonard Salvador, Mrs. Douglas Soutar, Mrs. J. L. Stoltzfus, Mr. Jack Tippit, Mr. Mort Walker, Mrs. Mort Walker, Mr. Brian Walker.

Marylin Robertson built an immense figure of a gorilla in paper mache to greet the guests. Burne Hogarth, one of the most famous of the nine Tarzan illustrators, drew the program art, and Joe Kubert, Tarzan comic book artist for many years, painted an eight foot banner for the portico. A mini exhibit of various Tarzan artists was on display.

Most of the attendees were cartoonists and syndicate executives but devotees of cartooning came from all over the country (at $75 a ticket) to support the Museum and enjoy themselves in the process. The affair is held every year in November and everyone is invited. If you didn't receive an invitation this year and would like to come next November, let us know.

THE COMIC CHRISTMAS TREE

June Stratton

Greater Buffalo Press, Inc.

Cartoon Christmas Tree: Once again the Museum will be setting up its stunning cartoon christmas tree, which will be on view beginning Sunday, December 7th. The tree stands over fifteen feet high and is topped by a sculpture of Hagar the Horrible. The sculpture and the 108 hand-painted bulbs were made by June Stratton of the Greater Buffalo Press, who donated the tree to the Museum. The bulbs feature the likenesses of popular comic characters, ranging from Prince Valiant and Dick Tracy to Nancy and Popeye. This magnificent creation must be seen to be believed!

Cartoonists' Christmas Cards: Every year cartoonists create original Christmas cards to send to their friends and fellow professionals. Oftentimes these inspirational greetings give the cartoonists the creative opportunity to do something outside of the confines of their familiar work. The results are often amusing and colorful examples of unique cartoon talent.

MUSEUM CELEBRATES 7TH YEAR!

Thanks for making 1981 the best year yet for the Museum of Cartoon Art.

1981

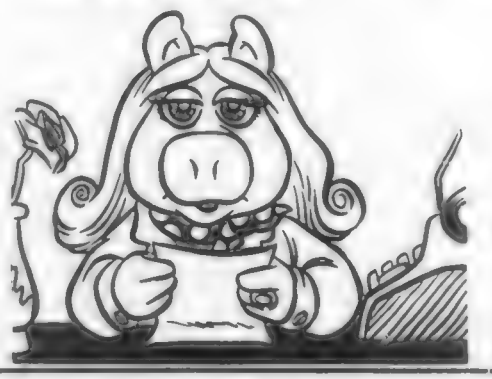
- Celebrity Cartoonist Appearances: Arnold Roth, Jules Feiffer, Helen Komar, Selby Kelly, Nancy Beiman, Linda Davrio, Tony DiPreta, Chuck Saxon, Burne Hogarth, Chon Day, Bill Hoest, Bill Gallo, Paul Szep, John Cullen Murphy, Whitney Darrow, Jr.
- Fourth Annual Children's Cartoon Contest.
- Easter Animation Show.
- Remodelled Main Exhibits.
- Castle Renovation.
- Gala Fundraiser Tribute to Tarzan.
- MAD Magazine Exhibit.
- MAD Men Symposium with Bob Clarke Mort Drucker, Jack Davis, Nick Meglin.
- Limited Edition Comic Art Lithographs.
- "Annie" Exhibit.
- Cartoon Workshop for Kids.
- Willard Mullin Sport Cartoons Exhibit.
- Muppets Exhibit.
- Children's Day.
- and our seventh Birthday!

Thanks to each and every member of the Museum of Cartoon Art. Your financial support made these events possible.

MUPPETS EXHIBIT A SUCCESS

The exhibit of Muppet design drawings and comic strips featured at the Museum during the Fall season was an immense popular success. The magic appeal of the Muppet characters rubbed off on the Museum, as our appointment book filled with reservations for class outings, Brownie Troops, and birthday parties. Although of particular interest to youngsters, the Muppet show was well received by all age groups.

The Museum would like to thank the Henson organization and King Features Syndicate for cooperating with us on this project; and Michael Frith, Patricia Munson, Leslee Asch, Bill Yates, and Guy and Brad Gilchrist for their time and interest.



MUSEUM HOLDS ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, November 10, was the date of the meeting of the board at the castle. Members are: Mr. Milton Caniff, Mr. Frederick Coyer, Mr. James Davy, Mr. Brian Donnelly, Mr. Joseph D'Angelo, Mr. Mort Frank, Mr. John Goldwater, Mr. Charles Kline, Miss Toni Mendez, Mr. John Milt Morris, Mr. John Cullen Murphy, Mrs. Lowell Robertson, Mr. Jerry Robinson, Mr. Philip Sills, Mrs. Douglas Soutar, Mr. Richard Splittorf, Mr. Jack Tippit, Mr. Mort Walker.

Reports of past activities were presented by the President. The budget and financial report were given close scrutiny by the board. The Museum is in the best shape financially, than it's ever been, thanks to the fund-raising efforts of Joe D'Angelo. Attendance is at an all time high. A lot of the restoration to the building has been done. We're in good shape all around, it was conceded.

Zim Autobiography © Horseheads Historical Society

Exclusive

ZIM AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Chapter VI

On May 28th, 1883, with precisely fifteen cents in my clothes, I draped my lanky form over the rear end of a horse-car en route to meet Mr. Joseph Keppler, debating fearfully with myself: "Should I assume a jaunty air or should I approach the distinguished cartoonist in a spirit of humility?"

Down the Bowery jogged the aforesaid car with me weakening rapidly as fate drew nearer. I walked across City Hall Park from "Newspaper Row," my legs fairly wobbling, meanwhile wishing every second that a dire calamity would occur to supply a plausible excuse for breaking the appointment. But nothing happened, hence I was forced to proceed to 21 Warren Street.

Outside, the structure was gloomy and depressing; within, I found a cheerful bustle of clerks at desks. Somewhat relieved, I breathed my name and business into a receptive ear. The message was wafted through a speaking tube to the great Keppler, three floors above, whereupon that high and mighty personage came down and met me.

Heaven's gates opened to me when I discovered that Mr. Keppler was merely a human being, kind and considerate. He was a typical artist of the old school — a commanding figure with iron-grey hair, mustache and goatee of the Louis Napoleon type. His partner, Adolph Schwarzmann was short, jolly, full faced, with similar hirsute adornments. After some discussion, a contract was drawn up in pen-and-ink and we all signed it; I was hired for a period of three years at five dollars a week the first year, ten the second and fifteen the third.

Emerging from the *Puck* office, my eye caught a sign on Greenwich Street:

Pork and Beans
and a Big Schooner
for/5¢

which prompted some mental arithmetic, the result being I selected that place as my future Delmonico's. For seventeen weeks I subjected myself to monotonous fare of beer and beans, until the very thought became anathema — like the tripe of sign-painting days. It was a godsend when my income increased and I was able to sit down to luxuries like Hungarian goulash and Horton's ice cream.

Fifteen cents a meal was my usual limit. To save a nickel in pleasant weather I used to hike to the office from my hall bedroom on East Eighty-second Street — a distance of about five miles. At that time the Yorkville section of Manhattan was out in the wilderness, with more vacant lots than there were houses, and whenever I started on a pilgrimage to City Hall Park I felt like a country yokel bidding good-bye to the farm. . . . Many a man would like to live his youth over again; so would I, if I could forget that Greenwich Street beanery and those long, long walks.

I recall when daily newspapers could not afford to publish illustrations, except for a few small advertisement cuts or, very rarely, a single-column map or a political cartoon reproduced from one of the weeklies. However, from 1873 to 1877 New York did have an illustrated *Daily Graphic*, which was of standard newspaper size and consisted almost entirely of pictures, very little advertising.

At this stage in the history of illustrated papers the system of engraving was undergoing a radical change from the tediously slow woodcut method to the rapid zinc plate process by which acids performed the work formerly done by the graver. Many of its political artists, whose names have since become famous for their work on contemporary publications, are Miranda, Rogers, Wales, Hamilton and Dalrymple. To these political artists was given over the entire front page of the old Graphic.

Prior to that only such weeklies as *Harper's, Frank Leslie's, The Police Gazette, Saturday Night* and *The New York Family Story Paper* were able to illumine their pages with wood engravings. The well-pawed *Police Gazette* displayed sketches of females in short skirts, exposing much less of their anatomy than we see in today's society rotogravure sections, and yet it was continually hounded by Anthony Comstock's Society for the suppression of Vice.

Before I was presented to Keppler my imagination pictured his studio as a gorgeous show place like an Arabian Nights dream. I expected to find the master cartoonist surrounded by Medieval armor and tapestries, Chinese jade and incense burners. It never occurred to me that such a museum would be unsatisfactory as a workshop. Keppler occupied a small clean enclosure in the *Puck* art department; a similar one adjoining was used by his lieutenant, Bernhard Gillam. The studios were about as imposing as the stalls of fine racehorses, yet in such unpretentious compartments were created the wonderful cartoons that made political history during the big presidential campaigns of the seventies and eighties.

Keppler, Gillam and Thomas Nast head the list of Nineteenth Century cartoonists in America. All three were foreign-born: Keppler hailed from Vienna, Gillam from the nursery-rhyme town of Banbury, England, and Nast from Bavaria.

Nast was America's first outstanding cartoonist. For about ten years he monopolized the center and both sides of the stage with little opposition. His part in overthrowing the Tweed Ring has become a saga, and his Republican elephant, Democratic donkey and Tammany tiger will outlast the parties they symbolize.

Nast drew most of his famous cartoons on wood blocks, working rapidly. A slab of boxwood large enough to accommodate a double page was made of a group of smaller blocks bolted together and smoothly surfaced and coated with a white preparation to the finish of modern bristol-board. After the cartoons were drawn they were engraved by skillful artisans. The whole process was considered a week's labor — nowadays it takes but a few hours.

At the time of my debut on *Puck*, Nast was still performing creditably for *Harper's Weekly* but was getting ready to retire, while Keppler and Gillam were gaining popularity week by week.

Keppler was painstakingly slow. There are no extant originals of his masterpieces, for the reason that Keppler drew directly on the lithographic stones from which they were printed, and as the stones were always ground off for succeeding issues of the magazine, the original drawings were necessarily effaced. The lettering was done in reverse, which led to some amusing mistakes.

Keppler's cartoons were real works of art. At first they were produced in one color and black. His latter-day creations were rendered by means of three color-stones and one black; by a clever process of distribution of colors in the press fonts and blending, as many as eighteen tints might be introduced in one cartoon.

For nearly three years I occupied a desk near Keppler's compartment and assisted with his color-stones. Being considerably in the boss's confidence. I had the opportunity to know him as well as anyone on the staff. Keppler's aim was to make *Puck* the best paper of its type — *Puck* was not merely a comic weekly, it was a very influential political journal — and as long as it published his and Gillam's cartoons *Puck* had no rival.

Keppler was most interesting when he talked about his past. I remember him telling me of the humiliation he endured when he was down at the

LET'S GO BACK TO 1776. THE THIRTEEN COLONIES WERE ENOUGH.
CLUB FROM PRIVATE PARTS
WHERE IS GROVER NOW?
DOWN WITH — THE — GOLD DEMOC
REBEL
THE 1896 TICK
16
16-1
SEN. MCKIN
ANTI-EX
FOR PRESIDENT AGUINALD
WATTERSON
H. W.
EXPANSION H. W.
PATRIOTIC SPEECHES H. W.
THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER. H. WATTERSON.
STILL KICKING DEMOCRAC
1896

THE
ANSION TICKET
FOR
1900
IN GOD WE TRUST
NIT.
16 TO 1
SILVER
FOR VICE PRESIDENT.
W. J. BRYAN
EDITORIALS
EDITORIALS
MANILA FICTION
EDITORIALS
EDITORIALS
I LOVE THE GENTLE COPPERHEADS
AUNT
UNCLE
ALTGELD.
I REFUSE TO ANSWER.
UNPOPULAR TORY Melodies.
67

CAPRICE.

By Julius F. Petersen

heel and was eking out a living at portrait painting. "I had finished a watercolor picture of which I felt tremendously proud," he reminisced. "It was my masterpiece — the portrait of a rich lady — and I had figured on getting a nice piece of change for it. You can imagine my feelings when the lady told me the picture didn't look a bit like her. I spat on it and rubbed the palm of my hand over the face before she had a chance to protest; then I said to her: 'Madam, you do not wish a portrait which doesn't resemble you,' and I threw it in a scrap heap."

Keppler was an actor as well as an artist — a vaudeville comedian, I judge, for he showed me some early photos of his act, a sneezing song. The scene of his earliest art efforts was St. Louis, where in 1871 he first published a German edition of *Puck* for one year. Then he moved to New York and drew funny pictures for *Frank Leslie's Weekly* for fifteen dollars a week, fell out with Leslie over a five-dollar increase and announced his determination to start a humorous weekly of his own.

"If you do that," Leslie warned, "I'll start one just like it and drive you out of business."

Nevertheless, Keppler collected $1500 capital, took Schwarzmann, the foreman at Leslie's printing plant, and in September, 1876, revived the German *Puck* — with a new sub-title, *Illustrirtes Humoristisches Wochenblatt* — which ran for exactly fourteen years. The venture was so successful that in March, 1877, Keppler established an edition in English, which remained a feeble bantling until he published in it a startling picture of a scene on Fifth Avenue following the death of a certain fashionable abortionist. Thereafter *Puck's* circulation rose rapidly and more colors were added to its cartoons, although no other sketches of that nature appeared.

Keppler was well informed on both American and European politics, but preferred international subjects for his cartoons because the pomp and ceremonial of the Old World afforded opportunities for more vivid color effects. His pictures were too refined to be classed with political cartoons; many of them were in the category of great paintings. Familiarity with the canvases of the early masters made it easy for Keppler to utilize them to fit modern conditions, which he often did.

When Keppler stepped out of the grotesque he became sublime. His allegorical scenes in which sorrow and sympathy were expressed, were models of color and composition. Keppler was a past master of lithography and understood how to get results in color by avoiding the harsh treatment of the less skilled draftsmen. His cartoons compelled one to study them from an artistic point of view long after their political significance had been assimilated.

Gillam's technique, on the other hand, made a stronger appeal to the general public, which grasped only the idea and not the subtlety of its artistic qualities. His work was strong in lines and more forceful in spirit as a cartoon, and impressed me as being the pictured thoughts of a great student, which in truth he was.

Gillam was never more contented than when he was occupied on Shakespearean subjects, for he knew that field. Historical situations twisted into modern politics was his big hobby. When Gillam ran short of ideas for the next week's cartoon, he would delve into Shakespeare, Dickens, Dore, Robinson Crusoe or even the Bible.

Gillam had a peculiar manner of proceeding with a cartoon. He would make a complete layout, then trace only the portraits upon the lithographic stone minus the bodies, and finish them in crayon. Finally he would add the bodies. Keppler always completed each figure or group of figures separately, beginning with the face and proceeding downward with a finished stroke and shading his figures as he advanced. Keppler's lines were soft and rollicking; Gillam's were firm and decided as if carved from stone.

I used to study Keppler's work. The grace and ease of his strokes captivated me. It was well adapted for lithographic cartoons, but I did not copy his style in comic drawing. L. Hopkins, once of *The Daily Graphic* and later of the *Sydney* (Australia) *Bulletin*, also had a great influence on me. Something in his pictures hit me forcibly, but I discovered in time that I was drifting into another man's technique, so I swung away from it, unconsciously creating a style of my own.

Keppler set me right on composition; I learned to balance a drawing by watching his method. Whenever he detected defects in my draftsmanship he suggested changes, that were always valuable. Gillam's technique was far apart from my own. I never knew him to comment on my style, nor did I ever discuss his style with him, although I used to help both Keppler and Gillam on their tint-stones.

There were no tricks of the trade in the *Puck* office; the whole matter of producing was simple — all it required was drawing ability. To draw on stone required practice, as the use of a grease crayon was more difficult than lead-pencil or pen-and-ink rendering. Most of my early sketches were crude in technique, I realized when I compared them with professional work but I labored diligently to correct my faults and as I improved I began picking up commercial art jobs which I handled as a side line after office hours. Eventually I acquired a large clientele of advertisers using my drawings at prices most gratifying to me, so that hardly a week passed in which I did not earn from fifty to seventy-five dollars besides the regular pay envelope.

Early in life my long name became a burden, so I threw two-thirds of it overboard, thus saving time, space and India ink, and providing a *merman* for any sea nymph who cared to salvage him. A friend, a very successful business man, noticed that my signature Zim had a downward slant. Said he: "Never sign your name downhill, always uphill; it looks more prosperous." From that moment I have always signed my drawings uphill for I believe there is truth in his assertion.

I must confess that I rarely see anything funny in my own drawings and am continually seeking better results, while the humor of other artists fills me with a sort of envious delight. My finished work always appears defective and, as I look back upon it, I am not far from incorrect in believing thus. At first any unfavorable criticism almost rendered me ill. In later years I learned to pay little attention to criticism, because I found it impossible to please so many different minds.

Doing the best I could to serve and to please my employers, there was no time to linger over the cartoon pages. Everything moved by schedule and every stage of the week's activities was planned; any delay in carrying out those plans might prove fatal by delaying the issue — which was as unthinkable as holding up a show would be among theatrical folk.

When the paper comes out and my work is in the critics' hands, the feeling I experience sometimes is akin to stage fright or "buck fever." A cartoon never looks as good to me when printed as it did while in course of construction, for usually I labor in a white heat of enthusiasm which grows cold by the time I gaze upon a reproduction of the finished product. The result is often disappointing, for I can discern, when too late, how the cartoon could have been bettered in composition and more interest injected in various ways. The layout of a cartoon is the part that fills one with anxiety; after that is settled the drawing of it comes easy.

On many occasions I have hurried out of the city rather than face my cartoons on the news-stand. Had I dared to make such a confession to my employers, I might have been given my walking papers, but by ingeniously smothering my own doubtful thoughts I managed to "get by." I believe every artist has his dull days when it seems impossible to do anything right. At such times the waste-basket receives more attention than does the publisher.

The sketch-book which had given me *entree* to *Puck* kicked about my premises for many years afterward, finding its way into the cellar, where it reposed in dust and mold. One day it turned up at a spring housecleaning and the drawings looked so uncouth that I promptly cremated them.

The Map of Ireland

Can you match up the lasses and lads? John Cullen Murphy, who does the PRINCE VALIANT strip for King Features Syndicate, is shown with his wife Joan and their eight children (four of them with their spouses and one with his fiancee) at Kennedy Airport before boarding Irish Airlines' Aer Lingus, enroute to Shannon, recently.

The family made the same journey 15 years ago (Photo 2) when the children were just youngsters. "But this trip, while much shorter, was more exciting," Murphy said. "The kids are older and were better able to appreciate the country and the customs."

See if you can identify the Murphys who took the original trip in the more recent photo. You'll have some left over. Meg, who is shown in Photo Number 1 wasn't born yet when the family flew to Ireland for the first time. And, as added starters, the second flight included Siobhan's husband, Spence Grogan, Cullene's husband, John Woody, Brendan's wife, Madeline and Finn's fiancee, Pam Benbridge.

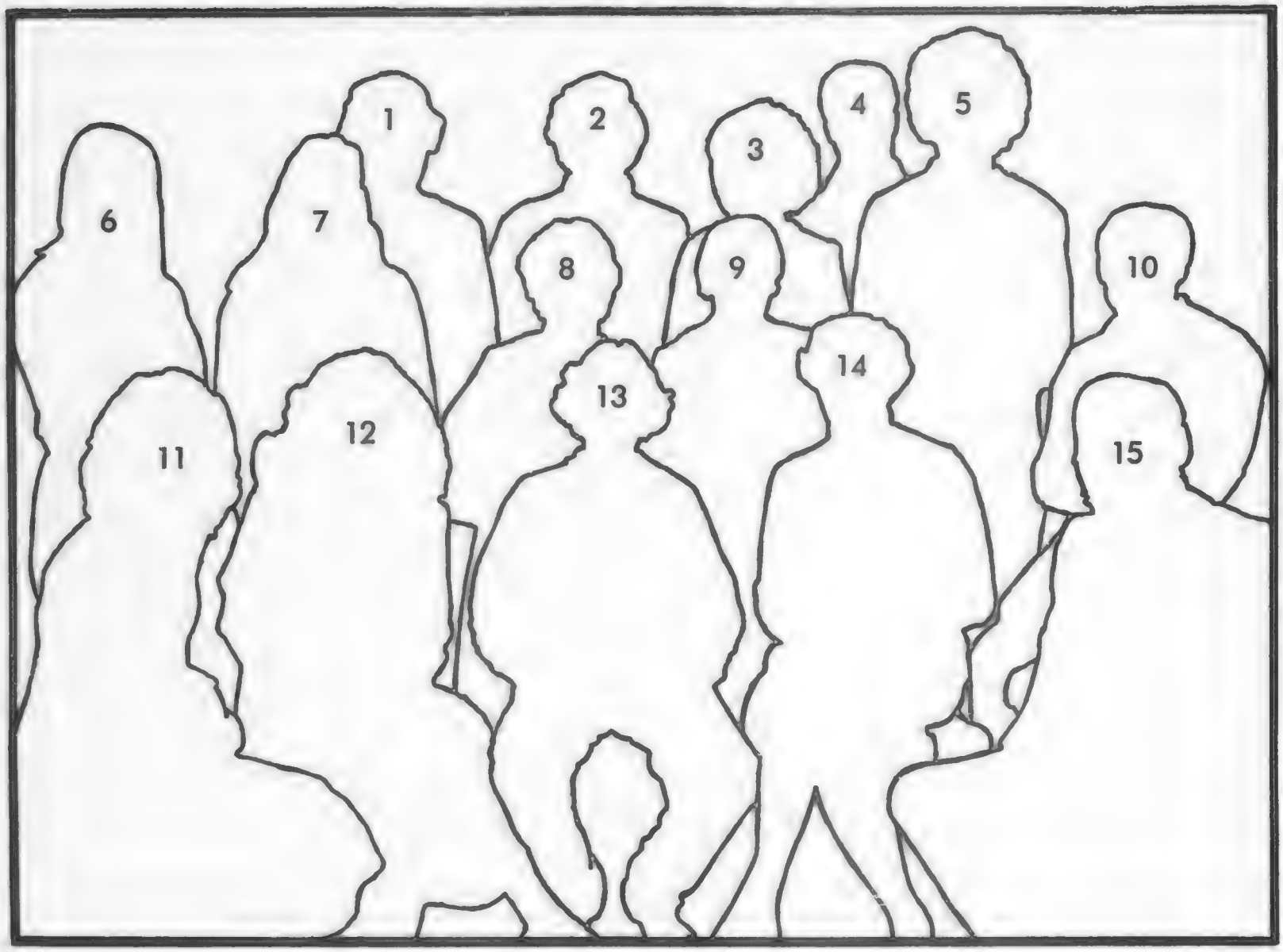
Guessing Game

(From the top)
Cait (on Murphy's shoulders)
Murphy and wife, Joan
Cullen Murphy
Cullene Murphy
Siobhan Murphy
Byrne Murphy
Finn Murphy
Brendan Murphy

Photo courtesy of KLM Royal Dutch Airlines

KEY ON NEXT PAGE

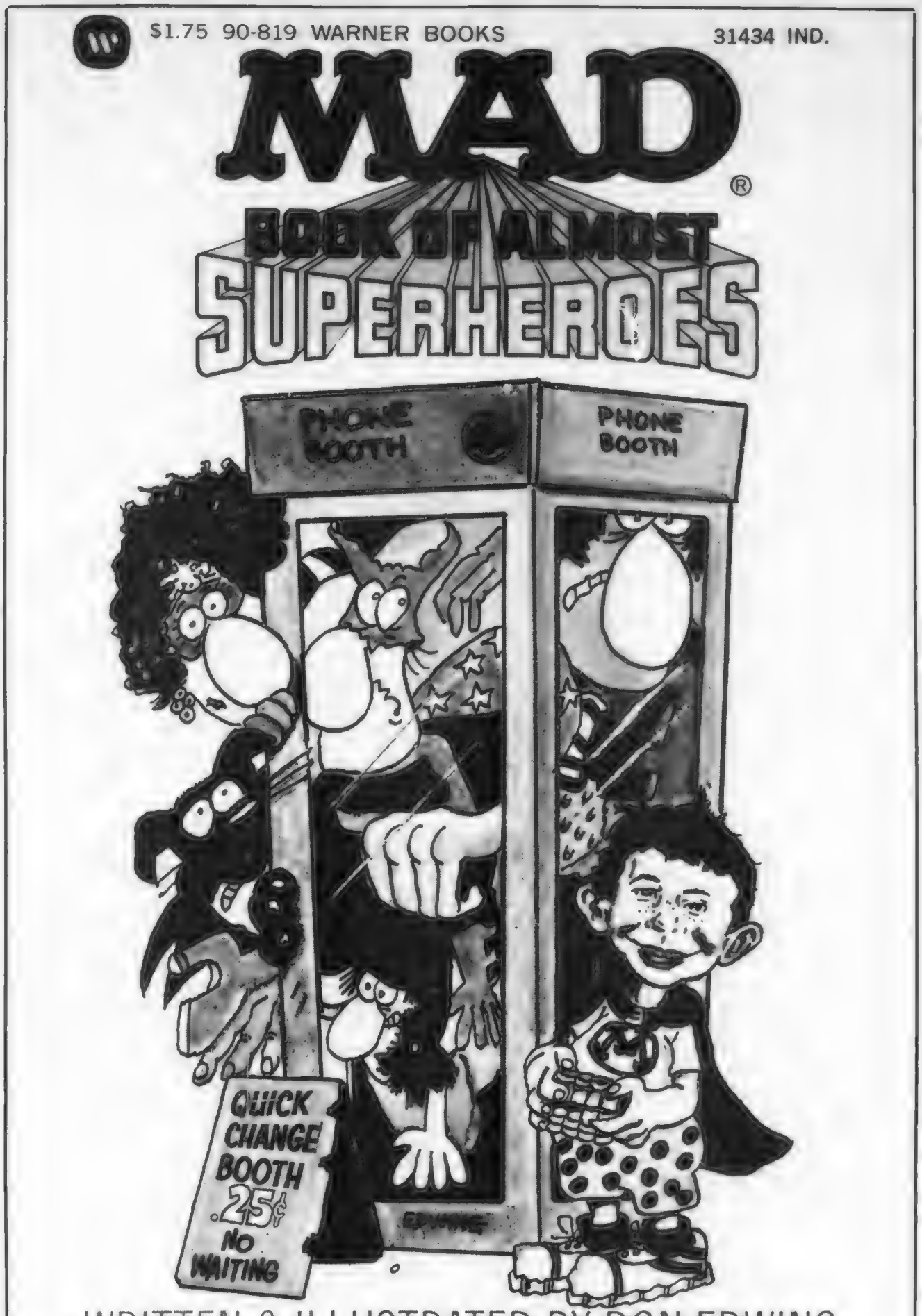
PHOTO NO. 1



Back row: (L to R) 1) Cullen Murphy 2) Finn Murphy 3) Siobhan (Mrs. J. Spencer Grogan) 4) Brendan Murphy 5) J. Spencer Grogan

2nd row: 6) Mrs. Cullen Murphy 7) Cait Murphy 8) Cullene (Mrs. John C. Woody) 9) Byrne Murphy 10) John C. Woody

Front row: 11) Mrs. Brendan W. Murphy 12) Finn Murphy's fiancee, Pam Benbridge 13) Meg Murphy 14) Mrs. John Cullen Murphy (Joan) and 15) John Cullen Murphy



Don Edwing is a superhero's superhero. He's done his super research since he was seven years old, assimilating every comic book title imported north of Weehawken, New Jersey.

-Jerry De Fuccio-

ed sullivan

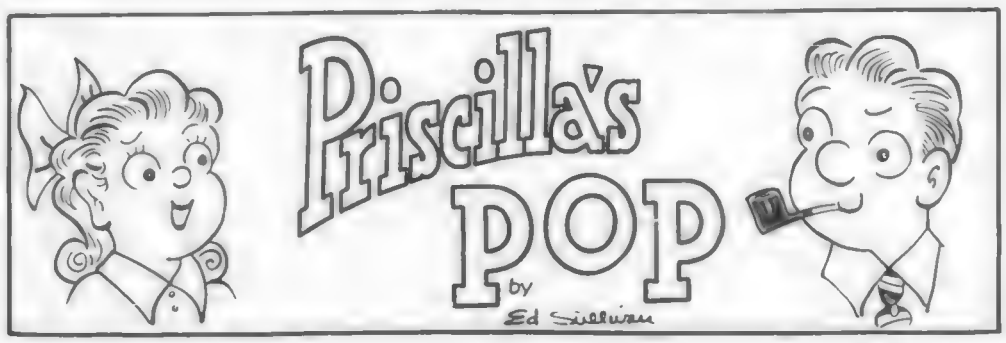
LIFE WITH PRISCILLA
by Ed Sullivan

Al Vermeer, a gentleman and cartoonist of uncommon skills, created an engaging line-up of characters in his strip, PRISCILLA'S POP. There's Pop, of the title, whose name Waldo Nutchell doesn't quite do him justice; Priscilla, all sweetness and innocence, a friend to every living thing, especially horses, frogs, and her dog Oliver; Carlyle, her brother, sports-minded and outdoorsy; Mom, very pretty, very feminine; Hollyhock, Priscilla's dearest friend, a tiny intellectual with a passion for books and culture; Jenny Lu, vain, pretty, and crazy for Carlyle — who couldn't care less; neighbors Bernard Botts and his wife Emily, best described as throwbacks to radio and TV's feisty couple, the Bickersons; and Stuart, strange and unpredictable, my favorite of all.

These and assorted other characters have bounced along in the comic pages for 34 years, the last five under the guidance of my own ink-stained fingers. It's been a pleasant experience.

I never met Al Vermeer — to my eternal regret — and whatever I know about him has been gleaned from things I've read here and there, and from studying several years' worth of his strips in the NEA service proofs. I know, for example, that he started his career as a sportswriter in Oakland, Cal., and did cartooning on the side.

When he went to the *San Francisco News,* he illustrated his own sports stories, and in 1947 he launched PRISCILLA'S POP, based on life with his wife Jo and their children. His hobbies were "music, fishing, camping, and exploring our wonderful California mountains."



PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan
ARE YOU ANXIOUS TO BE A TEEN-AGER, PRISCILLA?
NO WAY!
WHY?
MY COUSIN'S A TEEN-AGER"
"AND SHE HAS A BIG PROBLEM TRYING TO MAKE HERSELF PERFECTLY CLEAR.
YOU MEAN SHE CAN'T COMMUNICATE?
NO, SHE CAN'T GET RID OF HER ACNE!
7-7

From his strips it was obvious that Al was a gentle, sensitive man with a keen but equally gentle sense of humor. I always admired the crispness of his drawing style with its quick, rhythmic pen strokes and the effervescent characters that seemed to be performing a ballet all their own. There was a sureness, a liveliness about his style that set it apart, and I definitely considered it a "class act."

So in 1976 when Tom Peoples, then comic art editor of NEA, told me that Al was planning to retire and asked if I'd be interested in taking over the daily strip, I thought, "My God, I'll never be able to imitate Al's style."

It was, however, only a brief moment of trepidation, because just as light bulbs are meant to illuminate, cartoonists are meant to draw — at least if they want to eat regularly. So I said yes.

Tom asked me to do three weeks of samples and submit them as soon as possible. As far as I know, there were no other cartoonists in competition for the job. If there had been, I think Tom would have told me. Insecure as I am about my work and disliking competition as I do, I'm glad there weren't. It was a sweaty enough job, knowing that I finally had a chance to do a daily strip and that I might blow it. If there had been others vying for the strip, I probably would've had a coronary.

Prior to the Priscilla offer I'd been writing and drawing the OUT OUR WAY Sunday page for NEA, chronicling the life of the Willet family. It was an experience of sheer joy! I was crazy about the characters and I loved the constant bickering between Willis and his older sister Lil, the controlled common sense of Mom Willet and the put-upon naivete of Dad. To me they were real people and I moved them around with tender loving care and pride — even if they didn't have a very broad readership at that time. I can't recall ever doing an OUT OUR WAY Sunday that I didn't thoroughly enjoy.

Tom had mentioned the possibility of discontinuing the daily OUT OUR WAY panel after Neg Cochran retired. Neg had done that famous J.R. Williams comic for many years and was finally ready to call it quits. Tom said he wasn't sure how long the Sunday page would survive after that, but for the time being I could continue with the Sunday Willets and the daily Priscilla — if they liked the samples. Al wanted to keep doing the Sunday Priscilla awhile longer.

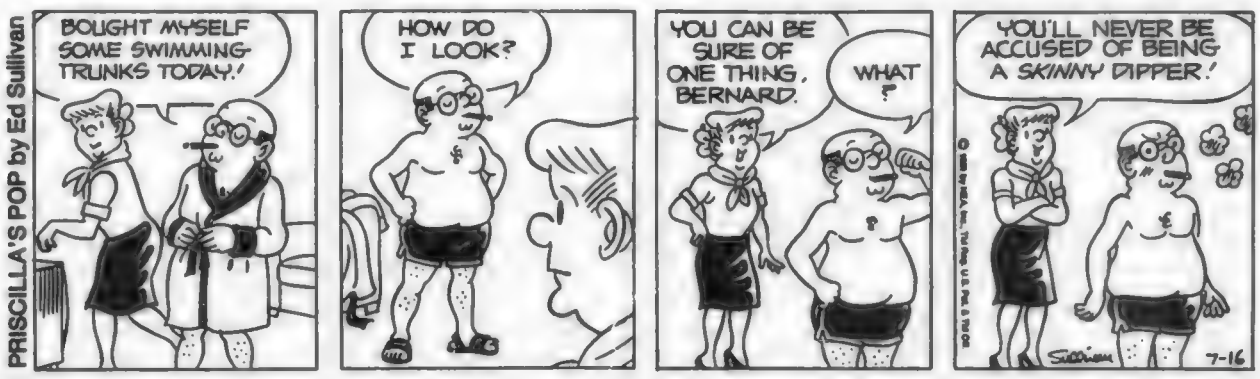
As it turned out, he drew the page from another year and then went into full retirement. So for several months, until NEA discontinued the Willets in 1977, I did both Sundays and the daily Priscillas.

Every artist in the NEA package gets a weekly proof of all the comics, so I had a large stack of these, accumulated since 1971 when I signed on for OUT OUR WAY. I used them to study Al's style and get the characterizations straight. Tom had asked me to do a few gags around Hollyhock and the library because the situation was popular with readers and Al had built a wide following among librarians. They sent him library cards from all over the country, and he always gave them an acknowledgement in the strip.

The samples went fairly well. Easier than I thought they would, actually. But I still wasn't satisfied that I'd captured Al's style well enough to get the go-ahead from Tom. I fretted about it after I sent them in and kept on fretting until I finally heard from Tom a week or so later. He said he thought the strips were fine, and Al was pleased that "Priscilla and her crew were in good hands." So I was off and running.

My first Priscilla releases appeared in July, 1976, and since that time I've reflected a lot on the "goods" and the "bads" of doing someone else's strip. Some artists work as assistants for years and years, and if they have a chance to take over their boss's strip, they just glide into it naturally. They've had the benefit of working closely with the characters and pretty much know the whole philosophy of the originator.

But going into someone else's strip "cold" can be a little harrowing. One frustration is the possibility of being locked into a drawing style and type of humor that's far removed from yours. Every cartoonist's work has the stamp of his own personality on it. It s humorous fingerprint, with swirls and convolutions and subtle patterns that defy perfect duplication. Style is more than just head shapes, postures, and the way you draw feet. You find that out when


PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan
BOUGHT MYSELF SOME SWIMMING TRUNKS TODAY!
HOW DO I LOOK?
YOU CAN BE SURE OF ONE THING, BERNARD.
WHAT?
YOU'LL NEVER BE ACCUSED OF BEING A SKINNY DIPPER!
7-16

PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan
FOR 25¢ I'LL HELP YOU DISCOVER THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
STUART'S TRAVEL AGENCY
HEY, THERE THEY ARE! RIGHT NEXT TO PUERTO RICO!
WORLD ATLAS
STUART'S TRAVEL AGENCY
5-4

you have to draw someone else's characters in situations that have no precedent.

I've had people who follow Priscilla regularly tell me that they can't see any change in drawing style since I've taken it over. But I know that isn't true. Al had a sense of frolic that I haven't really been able to capture, although I strive manfully to keep the strip animated and interesting, and not just a series of talking heads.

Another frustration lies in dealing with the characters. You can't do a lot of experi menting with an established strip. If a syndicate wants you to continue someone else's strip, it means the comic is still healthy and has a definite following. It means readers are relating to the characters as they are, and if you try to change their personalities or the way they speak you can get into trouble.

I try hard to keep the tone of the strip pretty much the way Al established it. But sometimes I have a tendency to get a little more rowdy, sophisticated, or topical than he would have, and I hear from the syndicate about it. A syndicate protects its product, you know, and it may have a tendency to lavish more protection on an established strip than on a new one that's just feeling its way.

Once in the recent past I was cautioned for underplaying Priscilla's role in the strips, a criticism I questioned but thought fruitless to pursue. In going over Al's work I found that he always put a strong emphasis on Bernard and Emily Botts, Hollyhock, Stuart, and Reverend Weems. Priscilla appeared most often three times a week and frequently only two.

I've always gauged the success or failure of my strips on the responses of local readers and friends who live in other cities where PRISCILLA appears. They tell me on the street, by note, in a phone call, when they like certain strips. No one ever said to me, "Hey, what's happened to Priscilla?"

Sometimes central characters in comic strips get short shrift, but it doesn't necessarily mean the condition is permanent or fatal. It simply means for the time being the cartoonist has found other characters more interesting and is going with the flow.

We all know when we've done weak strips and when we're on target. Clinkers are everywhere, but mercifully the good humor outweighs the bad. Readers, I believe, don't worry about humorless strips too much, unless the condition goes on day after day. They either like the characters or they don't. And they're faithful through the bad days, especially if they've followed a strip for a number of years.

Up until a few weeks ago I wrote all my own gags, partly out of pride but mostly because I had strong feelings about how I wanted the characters to act and react. Recently I've used a few outside gags to take the pressure off and I kind of like the feeling. I try to stay away from really "cute" things, although that type of humor is popular with a lot of readers.

Everyone has his own method of writing ideas, but the ones I fall back on the most are gleaning several newspapers a day for interesting items, headlines, ads, trends, and fads, and trying to relate them to the personalities of the characters; or picking a random situation like "I wonder what she really thinks of me . . ." and letting that roll around in my head . . .

PRISCILLA: Lester is so shy. I wonder what he thinks of me. Find out for me, will you Ethan?

ETHAN: Okay. (Goes over to Lester) What do you think of Priscilla?

LESTER: Oh, wow! She makes me hear bells!

ETHAN: (To Priscilla) He thinks you're a ding-a-ling.

I also like working out strange definitions of words: "I always thought a metronome was a elf that lived in a big city." And puns:

HOLLYHOCK: I have a neighbor who hates plumbers.

PRISCILLA: Gosh! What would you call a person like that?

STUART: A narrow-minded spigot.

Or, Stuart is selling "Little Known Historical Facts" for a nickel.

STUART: Charles Dickens once wrote a novel about a young man who wasted his life sunning himself on the beaches of the world! His publisher

PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan
LESTER IS SO SHY!
I WONDER WHAT HE REALLY THINKS OF ME.
FIND OUT FOR ME, WILL YOU, ETHAN?
OKAY!
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF PRISCILLA?
OH, WOW! SHE MAKES ME HEAR BELLS!
HE THINKS YOU'RE A DING-A-LING!
7-20

PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan

PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan

WHY DOES YOUR BROTHER HATE ME, PRISCILLA?
HE DOESN'T HATE YOU, JENNY LU!
DEEP DOWN HE REALLY LIKES YOU!
HI, CARLYLE!
BUZZ OFF, JENNY LU!
I'M TALKING DEEP, DEEP, DEEP DOWN!
7-25
Sullivan

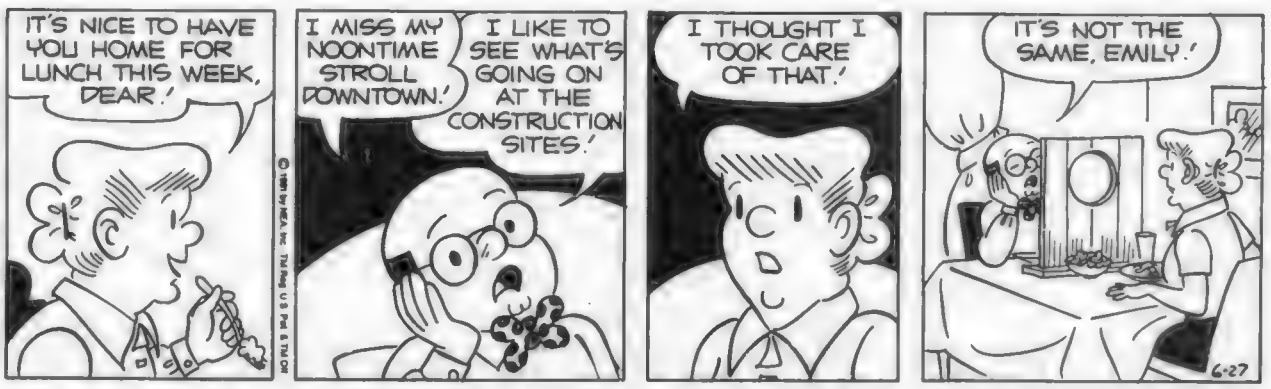
PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan

SEE? THAT'S WHAT I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT!
THE FRIDGE DOOR WON'T STAY SHUT!
THANK HEAVEN THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG!
I THOUGHT IT AUTOMATICALLY FLEW OPEN WHEN IT SAW CARLYLE COMING!
7-22

PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan

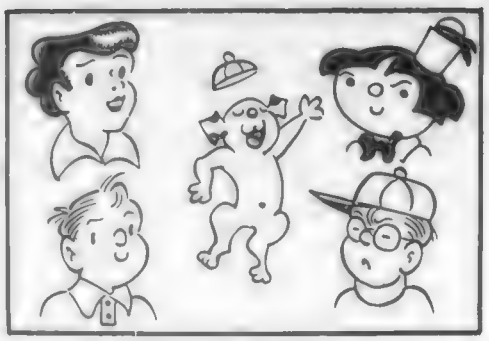
THESE TOURS ARE TOO EXPENSIVE!
OKAY! OKAY!
STUART'S TRAVEL AGENCY
I HAVE ONE THAT FEATURES AN UNDER-GROUND CHAMBER AND A LARGE BODY OF WATER!
WOW! HOW MUCH IS THAT?
25 CENTS!
THERE'S A TOUR GROUP HERE, DEAR!
5-7

PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan


IT'S NICE TO HAVE YOU HOME FOR LUNCH THIS WEEK, DEAR!
I MISS MY NOONTIME STROLL DOWNTOWN.
I LIKE TO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE CONSTRUCTION SITES!
I THOUGHT I TOOK CARE OF THAT!
IT'S NOT THE SAME, EMILY!
6-27

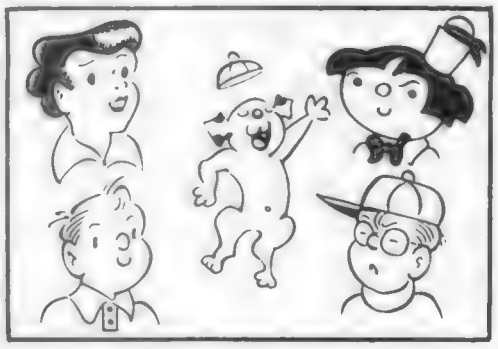
Priscilla's POP

by Ed Sullivan



Priscilla's POP

by Ed Sullivan



WE'RE OUT OF MUSTARD, DEAR, BUT I CAN GET SOME AT THE STORE IF YOU LIKE!
THAT'S SILLY! I DON'T NEED MUSTARD!
© 1981 by NEA, Inc. TM Reg U.S. Pat & TM Off

PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan
I SEE OUR PAPER'S FOOD EDITOR IS BEING HELD IN CONTEMPT OF COURT.'
HER SPECIAL RECIPE FOR HOLLANDAISE WAS ENTERED AS EVIDENCE IN A TRIAL.
WHEN THE JUDGE ASKED HER WHERE SHE GOT IT...
SHE SAID SHE COULDN'T REVEAL HER SAUCE!
WALDO...
WELL, I LIKED IT.
Sullivan
7-15

made him rewrite the whole thing and change the title to "David Copperfield."

HOLLYHOCK: What was the original title?

STUART: "David Coppertone."

One of my favorite things in writing ideas is to do a whole week on a single theme. It's a device you can't use every week, because it would be too monotonous, and monotony in the comics is about as welcome as herpes. But there are some subjects that lend themselves naturally to a five-or-six day treatment and you know them when you see them.

I've done series on gasohol, Botts turning forty, Stuart dispensing "Little Known Historical Facts," Priscilla campaigning for a horse, and others. One of the best responses I ever had was for a series on Stuart and his travel agency.

Other gag topics I try to use occasionally are Waldo's mashed potato sandwiches, Mr. Grumbly's pennypinching, the Botts's marital stress, and Hollyhock's passion for books — all established by Al. One of the lines he used years ago is still remembered by a lot of people. It was said by Priscilla to her father: "Gee, Pop, I'm glad we married you."

Earlier I mentioned Priscilla's horse. Two Christmases ago I gave her the object of her heart's longing for more than 30 years. I did it because I thought she deserved it after all that time, and I hoped it would give me a new direction for ideas. So far it hasn't been as fertile a premise as I'd hoped but I'm still exploring the possibilities.

Priscilla named the horse "Miracle" because it seemed most appropriate. Just recently another horse named Miracle turned up in Mel Brooks's new movie, "History of the World, Part I." I hope Priscilla isn't too upset.

My wife and I weren't blessed with children so I haven't been able to tap into my own family for ideas. Memories of my erratic childhood, reading, and observations of friends' kids have had to suffice. Ideas are everywhere — or rather, *beginnings* of ideas are everywhere. I've found that rarely does one jump into your lap ready-made. Most of them have to be smacked, whacked, pushed, or pulled into place.

In my own appreciation of humor I lean more toward lunacy, I think. Truly inspired comic drawing wedded to a funny idea brings out responses that even my mother doesn't know about. Bob Thaves' FRANK AND ERNEST sends me into silliness, as does Arnold Roth's genius. Mike Peters appears touched with the special crazies, and I think his editorial cartoons are among the funniest anywhere.

The trend in comics today is apparently toward more and more "relevance." Some of the new strips, while clever, border on the self-indulgent, and there appears to be no place for whimsy. I hope we never get so self-consciously contemporary that we wipe out entertainment for its own sake.

I suppose I'm a traditionalist, and it's reflected in my work habits. I still draw on two-and-three ply bristol (plate finish) with pen nibs and India ink. I do it because I'm comfortable with it. I like the feel of the pen as it moves over the paper and the blackness of the line it produces. It's a little romance I've got going there.

I tried working with felt tip pens, but I have such sweaty hands I was always making smears. More power to the lads who can use them unsmudgingly!

After thirty years in this business I'm still chagrined at not having become a better artist or accomplished more than I have. But I still would never discourage anyone from pursuing a comic strip career if that's what he or she wanted. I'd only say this: Get all the training and experience you can. Have the words "observe" and "practice" written on your studio walls, embroidered on your sheets and tatooed on your buns. Be proud of your work but strive to outdo the last one. Don't be afraid of rejection, and don't get emotional about criticism. If it's from a professional it'll be constructive; if it's from anyone else it won't matter. Stay with it and avoid discouragement like the plague. Just remember, it took 32 years, but Priscilla finally got her horse! ●

PRISCILLA'S POP by Ed Sullivan
LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PUNK ROCK...
NOW WAIT A MINUTE!
THE MUSIC, BERNARD, THE MUSIC!
OH.
I THOUGHT SHE WAS STARTING IN ABOUT HER ENGAGEMENT RING AGAIN!
6-15

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SALES CATALOGUE

SUPERKERNAL by Guy Gilchrist, color, $125.
SUPERKERNAL IDEA SKETCHES by Guy Gilchrist, $5.00.
BEETLE BAILEY IDEA SKETCHES, by Mort Walker, $10.00
PRINCE VALIANT Idea Sketches by Hal Foster, $75.00.
INDOOR SPORTS by Tad 1926. Card game scene, $150. (others available).
OUTDOOR SPORTS by Tad, many available, $150.
HI AND LOIS by Mort Walker and Dik Browne. Daily $75, Sunday $125. Specific strips may be available to first person ordering.
AMY by Jack Tippit. Daily panel $35.
BOOMER by Mel Casson and Bill Brown. Daily $50, Sunday $100.
POPEYE by Bud Sagendorf. Daily $75.
PROFESSOR PHUMBLE by Bill Yates. Daily $50.
BONER'S ARK by Addison. Daily $50, Sunday $100. Specific dates may be available to first person ordering.
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE by Dik Browne. Daily $75, Sunday $150. Specific dates may be available to first person ordering.
BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker. Daily $75, Sunday $125. Specific dates may be available to first person ordering.
BUZ SAWYER by Roy Crane. Daily $100.
REDEYE by Gordon Bess. Daily $50.

POPEYE by Bill Zaboly 1959. Daily $75.

LITTLE ANNIE ROONEY by Darrell McClure. 1963. $100 Daily.
ELMER by Doc Winner. 1956 Sunday $85.
BRINGING UP FATHER by Vernon Greene. 1961. Daily $75.
TOOTS AND CASPER by Jimmy Murphy 1951 Sunday $150
LITTLE IODINE by Jimmy Hatlo. 1962 Sunday $125.
IT'S PAPA WHO PAYS by Jimmy Murphy. 1931 Sunday $125.
BARNEY BAXTER by Frank Miller. 1942 (No Barney) $100. By Naylor. Daily $65.
ROOM AND BOARD by Gene Ahern. 1942 Sunday $150.
THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME by Bob Dunn & Al Scaduto. Daily $75.
THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME by Jimmy Hatlo 1953. $100 Sunday. 1963 Daily $75.

SOFTCOVER BOOKS

THE LEXICON OF COMICANA by Mort Walker. Just released, the LEXICON is a satirical book making fun of cartoon devices, but also an encyclopedia for anyone interested in comics and for aspiring cartoonists. $4.95.

CARTOONING THE HEAD AND FIGURE by Jack Hamm. The classic instruction book on cartooning. $5.95

DRAWING COMICS, DRAWING & SELLING CARTOONS, DRAWING FUNNY PICTURES, all by Jack Markow. Three beginning-level instruction books, each $2.50.

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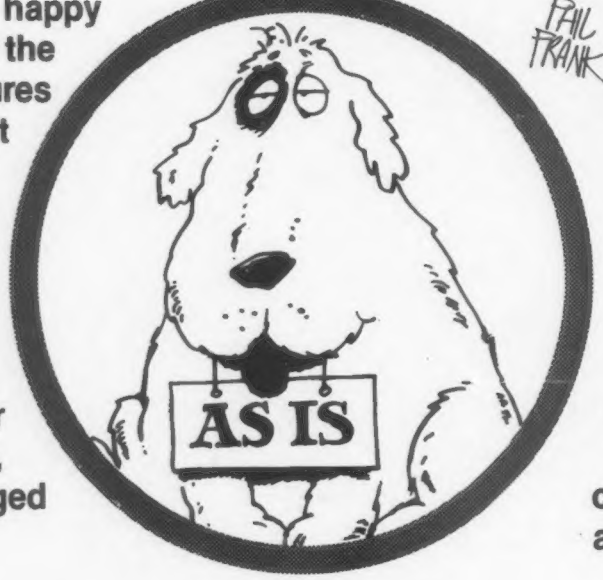

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